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East African Natural History Society

EANHS

BULLETIN

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JUN 14 1972
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Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes a leading and highly respected scientific journal —*The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum*. From the beginning of 1970 each issue will consist usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page will be issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Kabete, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Hon. Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN JANUARY 1971

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EDITORIAL

As you will see from the cover of this issue the name of our publication has been changed from *NEWSLETTER* to *BULLETIN*. It was felt that the word *BULLETIN* was more appropriate and would, perhaps, stimulate more authors to contribute short notes and articles which they would consider too good for a mere "Newsletter".

We are sorry that the contents are still duplicated, but there are two reasons for this: first, our aim is to publish punctually at the end of each month; if we were to have the *Bulletin* printed it is unlikely that we, or rather the printers, would achieve the good record of punctuality maintained so far. The second reason for duplicating rather than printing is one of cost: all labour, including the cutting of stencils, duplicating them, making up the *Bulletin* and dispatching it is volunteer and therefore costs the Society nothing.

SIAFU AND OTHER ANTS

1. THE PAVEMENT OF BODIES

It is well known that the African siafu, or driver ant *Dorylus helvolus* cross short stretches of water by literally paving the surface with the live bodies of their soldiers over which the army pours to the opposite side. However I was not prepared to see what actually happened one day. I had noticed a crowded siafu path crossing a sandy road near my place at Sibweza. Two days later I returned and wondered why the very heavily "trafficated" path was still just skimming the surface. Usually a siafu column digs itself more or less down into the ground after a few hours due to wear and tear and maybe also as a safety measure. After a day or two it may even disappear completely underground for long stretches.

I had a better look at my column and was surprised to discover that the whole surface of the path was "paved" by soldier ants, right across the road. The sand was very loose at this place and may have made progress very slow and difficult. Apparently they applied the same tactic here as when crossing a stretch of water. The soldiers, so quick to attack normally, only did so after being very rudely disturbed by a stick.

2. SIAFU IN PERIL

That the siafu should have good reason to fear another species of ant, or indeed anything at all, I had no idea of, before I came across something curious one day.

A couple of hundred metres from our house, something had happened to a strong column of siafu. At first I noticed an enormous number of siafu packed along the edge of one side of the road. They were in complete confusion and as they tried to advance into the road, they immediately withdrew. The road itself was littered with dead ants straight across to the other side. A few ants of a formicine species dashed to and fro between the dead siafu and a small hole in the ground about 20 metres further up the road. Their short abdomen is elevated, the ant itself is smaller than a large siafu, but the legs are very long and they run extraordinarily fast. There were not more than 20 of them in sight and they were all busily carrying dead siafu to their nest.

At first I was unable to grasp the situation at all. Then I noticed a small root elevated a few centimetres above the ground, in the middle of the road. This root was full of siafu who tried to get down, but each time were forced back as if burned. Some were hauled down by the formicines and immediately started dying in cramps on touching the ground. This indicated that the other ants must have sprayed the whole area with a poison very powerful for the siafu. This was proved by the following experiment: on some leaves on the roadside there was a great ball of siafu which I took and dumped on the road. There were probably more than a thousand individuals and there were none of the other species at this point. Immediately the siafu started to react as ants do when poisoned; wriggling and turning as if in cramp, unable to run. Within one minute there was no movement left. Not one managed to get out of the place although it was close to the edge of the road and the poisoned area.

3. THE BATTLE OF THE DINNER TABLE

The following is what I wrote in my notebook:

19th Jan. 1966. Heavy fighting is going on between two nests of a common, small black ant on our verandah. I do not know when the battle started nor about what. Probably two nests fighting to get possession of our dinner table. The activity on the table has been almost nil since fighting broke out sometime last night. Normally the table is swarming with them at mealtimes.

12.15. Seven and a half hours have elapsed since I noticed the fight. It had then already been going on for some time, judging by the large number of casualities. The army from the South seems to be the stronger and is all the time, very slowly advancing. There is a no-mans-land between the opposing forces, with some mopping up operations behind the advancing troops. Each side tries to pull their opponents into their own lines where they are immediately seized by several enemies. Sometimes two or three workers manage to kill one soldier. But whenever a soldier gets a good grip on anothers body, it is quickly cut in two.

15.30. The fight is still going on although not so intensely. The advance of the South army has been stopped and even thrown back about 5cm from its most forward position. The fight is now mostly a duel between a few at a time in the middle of no-mans-land. All the time on both sides, soldiers and workers have been travelling to and fro between the front line and their nests. Those tired of fighting have returned home while reserves have been hurriedly thrown in.

20th Jan. 07.30. The battle has raged all night and the South army has advanced further after throwing in reinforcements. It now looks like a last desperate stand only 10 to 15 cm from the North's nest. The whole area is black with dead and dying.

14.30. Merely mopping up operations left. Cannot see what is happening in the nest without breaking up the cement floor.

16.30 All signs of fighting finished above ground, but great activity by the South army.

21st Jan. Must have been fighting under the cement, because today there is again a desperate battle around the entrance hole to the North's nest.

28th Jan. Fighting is still going on around the entrance holes.

7th Feb. The battle still rages with undiminished force.

11th Feb. The North army has now driven theSouth back to the verandah post where the battle originally started.

For a couple of months after this there were indications that fighting was continuing under the cement floor. Every day dead ants were dumped in large heaps around the entrance holes in the floor. apparentely they cleared away all dead bodies from under the cement and carried them outside. Judging from the dead, at least 2000 ants were killed every day for more than two months.

J. Kielland,
Box 81,
Mpanda,
Tanzania.

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TARANGIRE NATIONAL PARK

I feel that probably few of you will know about Tarangire. Even if you have heard about it, you may not have visited it. It is situated about sixty miles out of Arusha south, on the Dodoma road. I visited it last month and was so impressed that I felt more people should know about it. It is new and unspoiled, a lovely mixture of my favourite parks, something of Tsavo, something of Samburu, and yet neither, it is Tarangire. I found the habitat fascinating, the game in November plentiful, and the birds, well, out of this world! In one day my tally was 146 species, and 28 species of mammals.

The tented safari lodge is comfortable and clean, the service is good. It has a lovely situation on the Tarangire River. The park is large, I covered 95 miles in the day, and did not see anything really, apart from the birds and mammals mentioned above! As yet it is not a tourist haunt and so I would recommend you to go while the going is good. I feel that in time it will become well known, and therefore full at the height of the season; but at the moment it is lovely, and I had it to myself. If any member would like more details about it, I will be only too pleased to let them know.

Jenny Horne,
Box 21247,
Nairobi.

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IMPORTANT REMINDER - NEST RECORD SCHEME

Completed Nest Record cards should be sent to Mrs Hazel Britton, Box 1102, Kisumu during the first half of January.

Editor.

NEW EAST AFRICAN PLANT BOOKS

'SOME COMMON FLOWERING PLANTS OF UGANDA' by E.M. Lind & A.C. Tallantire.

5000 copies of the first edition were printed in 1962 and sold out by the end of 1969. While it is especially useful in Uganda, this excellent little book is by far the best moderately priced introduction to the local herbaceous flowering plants for use in secondary schools, colleges and Universities anywhere between the Zambezi and the Gulf of Aden. It is therefore very good news that O.U.P. (E.A.) are to publish a revised second edition at a price probably below sh.20/- to appear (it is hoped) before Feb. 1971.

FERNS

We have never had a really good book for dealing with East African Ferns. Enthusiasts have had to make do with South African or West African works. This gap is now to a great extent filled with the appearance in November 1970 of FLORA ZAMBESIACA PTERIDOPHYTA by E.A. Schelpe. Although the area covered (Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rhodesia and Botswana) does not include East Africa proper some 90 per cent of East African ferns, many of them illustrated, are dealt with in this high quality work. The corresponding part of Flora of Tropical East Africa is not likely to appear within the next five years and will, to a great extent, contain different illustrations.

Obtainable from Government Bookshop, Box 569, London E 1. sh.35/- U.K. plus postage to E.A. 3/- and charge for payment by cheque 2/- total sh.40/-.

FLORA OF TROPICAL EAST AFRICA

Some 70 parts each dealing with a single family out of a total of about 220, have appeared between 1952 and 1970 the latest being GRAMINEAE (grasses) part 1. All are obtainable from the Government Printer, Box 30128, Nairobi (from whom a list of parts, with prices, may be obtained). Parts published since 1965 are also obtainable from the Government Printer, Box 33, Entebbe and those published since 1960 from the Government Publications Agency, Box 1801, Dar-es-Salaam (not from the Government Printer in Dar-es-Salaam as previously). Some 11 new parts, including ANNONACEAE, GERANIACEAE & OXALIDACEAE should reach East Africa before March 1971 and the LEGUMINOSAE: PAPILIONOIDEAE (PAPILIONACEAE), some 930 species, before June 1971.

'A NUMBERED CHECK_LIST OF TREES, SHRUBS AND NOTEWORTHY LIANES INDIGENOUS TO KENYA' by J.B. Gillett & P.G. McDonald (1970).

Obtainable from the Government Printer, Box 30128, Nairobi, price sh.3/-. This enables those in charge of parks, school or college grounds etc. to label their indigenous trees and other plants so that visitors and students may identify them. It is also useful for bringing up to date the nomenclature in Dale & Greenway "Kenya Trees & Shrubs" (1961).

Further information about works useful to students of plants in E. Africa is obtainable from The E.A. Herbarium, Box 5166, Nairobi.

J.B.G.

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS AT ASSEMBLING

THE PEPPER TREE MOTH

As many members will know, 'assembling' is a technique used by entomologists whereby a virgin female moth is used to attract males. This phenomenon is resticted to certain species but has been known for some time; for example, James Outfield wrote of it in the 18th century:-

"Take a Female into the Fields who has not been touched by a Male, (a circumstance essentially necessary) and set her down in a Box cover'd with Gauze; and if within a Mile down the wind there should be a Male, he presently snuffs the Effluvia exhalid From her and Finds her out by the Scent; by this Method several Males have been taken in a day".

The above description refers to the European Emperor moth *Saturnia pavonia* but the details are true for the other species which may be 'assembled'.

The purpose of this note is to draw attention to my inability (so far) to attract male Pepper tree moths *Nudaivelia krucki* to a female by this method. The Pepper tree moth is common round Nairobi and as it is a member of the Saturniidae (Silk Moths) I felt it was a species that might 'assemble'. I have now tried three different females at Kabete including one which was confined in a porous basket for 72 hours. There has been no response.

Have any other members experience of 'assembling' this or other East African species? I should be interested to hear.

J.E. Cooper,
P.O. Kabete.

FINFOOT NOTE

On Saturday 7th November, 1970, standing on top of the Rock Hyrax cliff in the Nairobi National Park at about 6 p.m., I had an excellent view of a male Finfoot *Podica senegalensis*. He was swimming along the stretch of water immediately below the cliff from right to left. A troop of Vervet Monkeys *Cercopithecus aethiops* came walking in single file by the water's edge. The Finfoot made two aggressive passes at them, and the third time came out of the water and chased the Vervets away. He stood for some minutes on the mud shore and his red feet shone in the evening light.

Rosemary Francis,
Box 1221,
Nairobi.

MRS RUDNAI ON LIONS

All who attended it must have enjoyed the talk given by Mrs Rudnai to Society members. We all felt that we knew lions better by the end. Without having taken notes, the following are some of the points that stayed in the mind of one listener.

For a detailed study it is necessary to know your lions apart. The markings of a Giraffe or Zebra are different in each individual, and we recently heard how a photograph of a giraffe's neck will enable you to identify that individual, dead or alive. Mrs Rudnai says she knows her lions by their faces; but to act as a check she uses the pattern of spots on the muzzle out of which the whiskers grow. This pattern is different in each individual.

Lions, among cats, are distinctly gregarious. They do not of course live in large herds, but they do live in family parties of two or three lionesses and their cubs. During the period of Mrs Rudnai's study, there were four such "prides" in the Nairobi National Park (where the study took place) and they had distinct territories. But there was only one full-grown male in the park, and he went round to all the prides when there was a lioness in heat. Mrs Rudnai never saw him make a kill for himself. His food was provided by the pride.

Mrs Rudnai wanted to know if they had any food preferences, and showed us a list of the kills that she had seen or found. The Wildebeest proved to be the favourite animal, not because it is the most plentiful, which it is not. Naturally a plentiful animal will be killed more often than a rare one. The Kongoni is the most plentiful animal in the park and yet it was not killed so often as the Wildebeest. Another fact to take into account is the time of hunting. Our lions hunt mostly at night. In places where they hunt by day the Warthog is high on their list of preferences. But Warthogs are not about at night.

Another interesting point is the method of killing. To bring down a full-grown Wildebeest going at full speed without getting hurt requires great skill, and we read in books complicated descriptions of how this is done. But lions at any rate do not seem to use any particular method. They seize any available part and sometimes start eating their prey alive like Wild Dogs. Many of us have seen horrible pictures of this being done. However, more often than not, the lion seems to seize the prey by the nose thereby suffocating it. (Cattle and such animals cannot breathe through their mouths - nor can new-born babies, which is why they are so easily suffocated.) This is a sophisticated way to kill, as it is indirect. The animal is not killed by being pulled down by the nose, but by suffocation.

Besides very fine photographs illustrating her various points, Mrs Rudnai brought her tape-recordings of the lions' various calls. Besides the ordinary roar, we heard the mating call and that of a lioness calling her cubs.

The question of how much they are disturbed by sightseers remains unsettled. In the Kruger National Park they seem to have become completely indifferent to cars and cameras and to hunt freely by day. Even here one supposes that they could always go away. It is not necessary for them to lie out in easily accessible places where any tourist can see them. There must be many pleasant spots well away from the tracks. But we were told recently that even in Amboseli pestering by tourists can do real harm.

It is impossible in a short note to write down all the interesting things that Mrs Rudnai told us. We were delighted to hear that her grant has been renewed for a further period, and we hope very much that she will come and talk to us again.

P.M. Allen,
Box 4486,
Nairobi.

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NEWS FROM THE SHIMBA HILLS

Members who have not visited the Shimba Hills National Reserve in the last six months may be interested to hear of some recent developments there. Grass is being mown along the roadsides in the Longo-Magwandi area in an effort to keep the sable antelope *Hippotragus niger* in places where they can be easily observed. One herd of about twenty has become so tame that the animals hardly bother to move when approached by a vehicle.

The herd of twenty roan antelope *Hippotragus equinus* which were captured in the Ithanga Hills and transported to the Shimba Hills are faring well in in their enclosure near the Longo-Magwandi Forest. They are expected to be kept in enclosures for six months.

A campsite has been developed in the *Brachystegia* forest towards the wireless station. It is a lovely site: numerous epiphytic ferns and orchids festoon the branches of the old *Brachystegia* trees. Toilets have been constructed and water will be provided in barrels. Fees of sh.5/- per person per night will be charged.

A picnic site has been developed in the Makadara Forest. Trees are being numbered in order to facilitate their identification. Roads in the park are being maintained in excellent condition and many new ones have been constructed.

Visitors to the Shimba Hills should be sure to see Sheldrick's Falls, a beautiful 18m high falls now requiring about an hour's walk to reach. It is to be hoped that a road giving easier access to them may be constructed. Precise directions for reaching the falls and perhaps a guide can be obtained at the gate.

Note that there are now entrance gates to the Shimba Hills National Reserve and National Parks entrance fees are being charged. These are certainly quite modest and should not deter anyone from visiting this lovely park.

Robert Faden,
E.A. Herbarium,
Box 5166,
Nairobi.

FIELD MEETING - SUNDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 1970

Mr Charles Dewhurst of Muguga reports on the field trip to the E.A.A.F.R.O. ranch at Athi River.

The party of 40 members first visited the Athi River and one of its ox-bow lakes on land belonging to Mr J. Hopcraft whose permission to be on his farm they acknowledge with gratitude. A Genet Cat *Genetta tigrina*, 'tree'd' by some dogs was seen; also a large tortoise shell. Large numbers of Meloid beetles, *Mylabris aperta* var *bioculata*, Perid ("Whites") butterflies and grasshoppers were seen, also a bees' nest.

After an early lunch, they moved to the E.A.A.F.R.O. ranch. One of the ponds there was alive with birds, small frogs, flies and semi-aquatic grasshoppers of the family Tetrigidae (often called "grouse locusts).

To conclude the outing, Professor Robertshaw, in the absence of Dr. Harthoorn, very kindly gave up his time briefly to explain experiments investigating the effect of solar radiation on the thermo-regulatory mechanisms of game and domestic animals.

NATURE NOTE

On a recent collecting trip to the Karura Forest, a young Pyrrhocorid bug was found feeding on a dead fly. As far as I know, this is the first record of one of this group feeding on anything other than plant sap. The fly, a Muscid, appeared to have been knocked down by rain the day before, and it was in a small depression on the path which was still damp. To check whether the the bug was actually feeding on the fly, it was moved slightly three times, until it was out of the depression; the bug moving away each time and then returning to the fly, not to the damp depression. Finally the proboscis was seen to enter the fly. Both the fly and the bug were collected in spirit and are now in the Museum collection.

M.P. Clifton,
National Museum,
Nairobi.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

ENGLISH NAMES

I have recently seen a copy of the first *Newsletter*, congratulations. I refer to page 8 of the August 1970 issue. Forbes-Watson on "The New East African Bird Checklist" states - "fortunately the English names are still the same".

I have recently been engaged on a study of these remarkable and often quite stupid English names and the many inconsistencies in usage, as shown by the very many published works, where we find many unorthodox, so-called English names for one and the same bird.

Why English names for African birds? What use, what necessity, what advantage to anybody? Each new book published introduces new English names, Backhurst & Backhurst (in the Checklist referred to above) is the most recent example - page 24 - 'Papyrus Canary'. Fortunately White, from which the Checklist was taken, refrains from English names and thus is to be congratulated, however the most unhappy feature of his work is his 'lumping'. I note that Hall & Moreau in the new "Atlas" do not agree with either White or Traylor (pers. comm.) and therefore, I suspect, with the new "Peters", soon to be published.

Do please let us stick to scientific names and forget the English for birds, butterflies, plants etc.

Take a look at Pinhey, "Butterflies of Rhodesia". I understand the publishers insisted on having English names so these had to be invented, and just look at the results. Williams, "Butterflies of Africa" follows suit and gives English names, a pity and unnecessary, how does an English name help?

QUID EST IN NOMINE ABSURDITATUM REDUCTO

I saw a PURPLE GRENADIER[i] with a BISHOP[ii] flirting with a WIDOW-BIRD[iii] amongst the LOVE GRASS[iv] while a CORDON BLEU[v] looked sideways at a WHISKERED BULBUL[vi] and a GONOLEK[vii] sang in unison with an AKALAT[viii] which then chased a GOLDEN-SPANGLED POLICEMAN[ix] among the PANSIES[x] and the BLACK-EYED SUSANS[xi].

i. *Granatina ianthinogaster* used by Praed & Grant = *Uraeginthus* of Hall & Moreau = *Estrilda* of White!

ii. Could be 'human' or say, a 'Red Bishop' = *Euplectes orix franciscana* but more correctly a 'red Franciscan Bishop'? or it could be a 'Black Bishop' = *Euplectes gierowii ansorgei* more correctly 'Ansorge's or Gierow's Bishop'.

iii. Could be human and slang or one of many species of so-called 'Widow-Birds'.

iv. A name applied to many species of grass and other plants, ie. the grass *Setaria verticillata* or the dicot *Galium aparini.*

v. A super cook or chef, but is *Uraeginthus bengalensis* used by Hall & Moreau and also Praed & Grant but is *Estrilda bengala* of White!

vi. A bird *Andropadus latirostris euginius.* But what is a Bulbul? Comes from the Persian or Indian for 'One who sings sweetly'.

vii. The Shrike *Laniarius erythrogaster* of Praed & Grant but why "Black-headed' when translation of the scientific name is 'Red-bellied'. However, could be *Laniarius barbarus,* the Gonolek of Praed & Grant but which according to White is *Laniarius barbarus erythrogaster.* Who 'invented Gonolek, I have still to discover.

viii. Akalat = Thrush Babbler! = *Illadopsis, Pseudoalcippe, Shepardia* and even *Alethe,* thus refers to birds in the Turdidae and Timalidae! Name apparently native and West African.

ix. Some forces really dress their police up and why not? But the name is applied to a butterfly - see Pinhey.

x. A garden or wild plant, genus *Viola* or a butterfly, genus *Precis* see Williams.

xi. A name applied to several species of flowering plants, particularly *Thunbergia.*

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen .

While I agree with much that Mr Cunningham-van Someren says in his letter above there is, nevertheless, room for English names as well.

Any language contains many names for living things found in the country of origin of the language: the English language is very rich in words and the inhabitants of England traditionally have had a deep interest in animals and plants resulting in a large number of *well-established* names for members of popular groups of organisms. Most other languages do not have the wealth of animal and plant names found in English. In Africa there are names for living things in all the vernaculars (including Kiswahili) however these names are frequently, but not always, imprecise. English names have been invented for the animals and plants in popular groups found in the countries colonised by the British and often these names are long and cumbersome, there is also the added annoyance that different names are used in East, South and West Africa for exactly the same organism. For these two reasons alone it is worthwhile for naturalists to become familiar with the scientific names. However, very often, English names are most useful, especially for designating groups, for example, it is useful to be able to refer to a bird as 'a flycatcher'; to use the scientific group name poses difficulties. In modern useage one *could* say 'a Muscicapine' although Mr Cunningham-van Someren might prefer to say a 'Muscicapid' which to some people, would imply a member of the Muscicapidae in the sense used by most modern authors. The word 'flycatcher' is, in the Old World at least, unambiguous. I also maintain that on many occasions English names for species are still required, for instance most people would refer to the Saddle-bill Stork by its English name, and how many people talk about the *Loxodonta africana* problem in Tsavo? Indeed, Mr Cunningham-van Someren, in his latest paper (Animated perches and feeding associations of birds in the Sudan, *Bul. Br. Orn. Cl.* 90:120-122) gives all birds mentioned English names, and sometimes (after the first mention) *only* English names. In his letter above he also raises some points regarding the use of scientific names by different authors; although I should like to tackle some of these issues too, I think that it would be better to ask for comments from other members first.

G.C. Backhurst, Editor.

Sir,

I received the J.E.Afr. nat. Hist. Soc. 28(119):10 - 15 this morning, and was most interested in the account of the new four-toed mongoose, because this must have been the animal I saw here some little time ago.

I described it at the time as being 'very dark mole-coloured', or 'almost blue-black'.

It was quite a small mongoose and I did not notice its tail - except that it was not slender and recurved like that of *Herpestes sanguineus* - but I did notice that its head was not the usual pointed 'mongoosey' type, but much more like that of a marten.

I am quite certain not to be believed, as I recently caused some slight interest in the Herbarium, due to my discovering an *Erythrina burana* in my garden, and it will be thought that I am just avid for more publicity!

However, I really did see the beast, and have seen countless mongooses in India, Ceylon and here and was struck the moment it ran across our road - or cart track - by its almost black colour; especially as it paused for a second, as they generally do, before diving into the hedge.

The house we are living in is an old Agricultural Department house off the Kangundo Road. Chiefly surrounded by bush and rough 'shamba'. We have no made road to the house, and the mongoose ran from rough grazing ground - long grass, bushes and some trees - into a thick hedge of 'California Daisy' on the right.

Dr. G.I.G. Keys,
Box 19,
Machakos.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, January 11th - Alan Root's Film "Baobab" will be shown in the Ford Foundation Hall at the National Museum at 5.15 p.m.

Saturday - Sunday, January 16th - 17th - Weekend Camp at Ngobit, by kind invitation of the Carnegie family.
Campers should be self contained with camping equipment, food and drinking water. Firewood will be available. The camp will be at apprx. 7300 feet. There will be opportunities for birdwatching and fishing, and an excursion up into the Aberdare Forest for members with 4-wheel-drive vehicles. Please meet Mrs Campbell on Saturday January 16th at Naro Moru at the turn-off to Thompson's Falls at 2.30 p.m. sharp.

The Bird study Group will meet at the Museum on Thursdays at 5 p.m. Beginners, newcomers and students of all ages are welcome.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due at the beginning of January, and it is a great convenience if these are paid promptly, and if those who, for any reason, are not renewing their subscriptions would let us know. New Banker's Orders were sent out earlier in the year to those who pay in that way. If any such member has not yet changed his Banker's Order from 30/- to 50/-, would he please do so now? Forms are available from the Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Members who do not wish to keep their Journals are asked not to throw them away, but to return them to the Secretary, as certain numbers are in short supply.

With reference to Dr. Bock's article on the Coral Reef, it may interest readers to know that in 1944 Mr Hugh Copley, the Fish Warden, wrote in our Journal "A popular guide to some of the fishes of the Coral Reef" and a few copies of it still remain for sale at sh. 3/-. The paper contains detailed line drawings of 33 species of fish. Those members whose interest was stirred by Dr. Bock's article may like to secure a copy of this earlier one while it is still in stock.

Members are reminded that a list of reprints for sale can be had from the Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi.

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FOR SALE

One pair of West German ZEISS 10 x 50 binoculars in case. These ar are not the 'Dialyte' type but the real thing - the most compact conventional 10 x 50 available. shs. 1000/- o.n.o. please.

Offers to Graeme Backhurst, P.O. Kabete, tel. 87 - 231 during office hours.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
JUN 14 1972
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Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN FEBRUARY 1971

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held in the Ford Foundation Hall of the National Museum, Nairobi, on Monday 8th March, 1971 at 5.15 p.m.

The Business Meeting will be followed by a talk by Mr. J.S. Karmali on "Nature and the Camera" illustrated with slides.

Nominations for Office Bearers and Members of Committee and notices of matters to be included in the agenda should be sent to the Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi, before 15th February, 1971. (Members are particularly reminded that our Treasurer Mr P.G. Archer is resigning and a successor will be needed).

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N.F.D.

Recently while on a working visit to the North-Eastern Province of Kenya, we were able to do a little bird watching (and insect collecting) in and around the vicinity of Mandera and, later on Wajir.

Mandera township is situated very near the border of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. The border consists, on the Somali side, of a post and a Termite mound and on the Ethiopian side, of the river Galana Daua which was in flood while we were there. We made the crossing on a raft of oil drums - somewhat hazardous.

Included in the areas we visited in this district were Ramu, approximately 80 km due west of Mandera, and Ashabito about 60 km South West of Ramu, a small village almost deserted at the time due to lack of water. Mandera township is very fortunate in having a plentiful supply of water and we could even have a shower whenever we wanted.

The general character of the area is typical of the N.F.D. with *Acacia Commiphora* scrub often with little else but sand underneath (this was , of course, still the dry season). There were stands of taller Acacia in Ramu township. The riverine parts were dominated by *Hyphaene* palms as well as *Acacia tortilis* and other species.

There are hills to the South West of Mandera, South and South South East of Ramu called respectively the Bamba, Borahra and Rarija hills, although none of these were visited by us.

The mammal life that we saw in the area, apart from large herds of cattle, goats and camels, was disappointing; only Reticulated Giraffe *Giraffa reticulata* was seen, hyaenas were heard at night at Ramu, these were probably the Spotted Hyaena *Crocuta crocuta*. No Grevy's Zebra *Equus grevyi* or Beisa Oryx *Oryx beisa beisa* nor any of the gazelles were seen in the area, in fact the only mammals which appeared to be common were Guenther's Dikdik *Rhynchotragus guentheri*, although even some of these we may have mistaken for one of the other northern dikdik. In the field, the extra length of the nose did not seem to be a very good character by which to seperate the species; we used the presence or absence of a ring round the eye and the body colour, as mentioned in "A guide to the larger Animals of Africa". Warthog *Phacochoerus aethiopicus* were also fairly common. We were unlucky it seemed, as the local people said there was "plenty of game" in the area.

The bird life on the other hand was very rich, and a list of the species identified has been lodged in the Library's Locality List File. We would however, like to mention two birds that have defied all attempts by us, using both Williams and Praed & Grant, at identification. The interesting thing was that each one was so distinctive.

i. A Parrot:

A small party of three or four birds was seen in the riverine bush about 50 km west of Mandera on the Ramu road. They made typical parrot-like squawks and were brown with a dark eye ring, a longish tail, green lower belly and under tail coverts (probably also rump) and had a dark-coloured, hooked bill.

ii. A Guinea Fowl

There was a large flock mingled with a flock of vulturine Guinea Fowl *Acryllium vulturinum* on the road to Ashabito approximately 35 km south of Ramu. This was the only place that we saw this particular type of Guinea Fowl. They did not correspond well with either the Crested or the Kenya Crested Guinea Fowl. The head and upper neck were bright blue bare skin, with a half collar of black feathers at the base of the neck; on the beak there was a small tuft of pale bristles or feathers.

If any readers have any ideas as to the identification of these two species we would be grateful to hear from them.

After we had finished our work in Mandera, we drove down to Wajir - the road made the Narok road seem like a motorway. Not much was seen on this journey except a Cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus*, which all the passengers insisted was "chui" until we showed them illustrations.

Our Somali driver, who drove very well, but at the maximum possible speed, did however let us stop to have a look at a very large flock of White-throated Bee- eaters *Merops albicollis*; there were at least 100 of these birds hunting insects that had presumably emerged after a rainstorm which preceded us. A Francolin with a black cap was also seen on a few occasions, but we failed to get a good description of this bird, however, subsequent investigation suggests it may have been a Crested Francolin *Francolinus sephaena*.

Wajir itself is very unfortunate in that it is very short of fresh water, and all the water is very saline. However, there is a "fresh water" pond near the centre of town (fresh to the extent that it was the same colour as Lake Nakuru and smelled nearly as bad) where people wash their clothes and the Army its lorries!

We visited this pond twice, and each visit proved very rewarding both for the "dudus" and birds it produced. Most spectacular was the morning flight of large numbers of at least two species of Sandgrouse.

It was in the Wajir area that we saw more Reticulated Giraffe and our first Ostrich *Struthio camelus* of the trip. Here game was slightly more abundant, with Dikdik leading the list followed by Gerenuk *Litocranius walleri* many of which were seen feeding in classic Gerenuk style; a few of the northern race of the Grant's Gazelle, called Rainey's Gazelle *Gazella raineyi* were seen as well as quite a few African Hares *Lepus capensis*. A brief chat with the Game Warden, and the sight of lots of "cat snares" in the form of large gin traps gave a disturbing picture of the situation in these parts.

From Wajir we flew to Garissa; but here we had no time to add any new species of birds to the list. A total of 99 species of birds were recorded, although many more were seen and by-passed, as this was a working visit, and not a bird watching safari.

E.S. Brown,
C.F. Dewhurst,
E.A.A.F.R.O., Muguga,
Box 30148, Nairobi.

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ELEPHANT BIOLOGY

On 14th December 1970 we heard a most interesting talk by Mr. I.S.C. Parker on Elephant Biology. Considering the interest that elephants have always excited, it is astonishing that so little should be known about them. Recently R.M. Laws has made a detailed study of six populations in different habitats and information has also been gained from study of those culled and from jaws and teeth that have been collected.

The elephant is in many ways like a human being, and might well have developed much further had it not been beaten in the race by man. It now seems headed for extinction, and its preservation, if we wish to preserve it, will be neither easy nor simple. It may well be more intelligent than non-human primates, and in its trunk it has developed an instrument comparable in dexterity with the opposable thumb. Its life span also compares readily with that of man. Its gestation period is much longer, but it takes about the same time to grow up and lives about as long. The growth and wear of the teeth put a natural limit to its life span of about 60 years. Another point of likeness is that the female finishes her reproductive life at about 40. What purpose in human beings and elephants does the extra period serve, after reproductive life is over? Jung asked this question for human beings and concluded that the older people were the ones who hand on the cultural heritage of the race from one generation to the next. Among elephants too, the old individuals, particularly the females, seem to serve as memory banks, and it is they who are the natural leaders of the groups which form the basis of elephant society. It is where they have been removed that one sometimes finds the formless mobs of several hundreds of elephants which are only seen on the edge of their range where they have suffered much interference.

Elephants do not easily adapt themselves to the neighbourhood of human beings. Their use of land compares with the shifting cultivation practiced in some under-developed countries. They eat a great variety and amount of food, and when their range deteriorates they should move away and stay long enough for the area to recover. But their present range is shrinking all the time, and as they are more and more confined their general health suffers and the richness and variety of the habitat is destroyed.

It seems then that, having interfered thus far, we must carry the process through and reduce the population to a size that the available land can carry. This requires study. Random killing, especially killing of apparently surplus females, only increases disturbance by removing the natural leaders. But to destroy a whole group, young and old together, seems to cause very little disturbance to other groups in the same area. The group can be driven by helicopter to a convenient place and painlessly killed, and the meat and the ivory disposed of. It sounds brutal; but it is not as if we had left or could leave the elephants to lead their lives in peace.

P.M. Allen,
Box 4486,
Nairobi.

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A WEEKS BIRDING AT MALINDI

I strongly suspect that the peacefulness of the Reynold's family holiday was rudely shattered when I turned up with binoculars, rings and mist net at the Silver Sands camp site for a week's birding and sunbathing with John Reynolds.

Our main aim was to have a go at mist netting the waders at Mida Creek, a few miles south of Malindi. John also wanted to try some wader photography there. Neither of our ventures was successful but we spent some interesting hours chasing birds in the scrub and grass in the vicinity of the camp site at Malindi.

The first visit to Mida Creek on the 10th December 1970 showed there to be good concentrations of waders, but a strong wind and unfavourable tides made mist netting impossible. There were good numbers of Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Great Sand Plover *C. leschenaultii*, Mongolian Sand Plover *C. mongolus*, Sanderling *Calidris alba*, Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea*, Little Stint *C. minuta*, Curlew *Numenius arquata* and Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*. In addition to two Bar-tailed Godwits *Limosa lapponica* we also saw a few Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatorala*, Terek Sandpiper *Tringa terek*, Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*, a black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca* and a Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*.* A walk through the forest behind Mida Creek produced some Black-breasted Glossy Starlings *Lamprotornis corruscus* and a good view of a Yellow-rumped Elephant Shrew *Rhynchocyon chrysopygus* as it raced across the path in front of the Land Rover.

The next morning we did some mist netting near the camp site and spent an absorbing ten minutes identifying three Zanzibar Sombre Greenbuls *Andropadus importunus* that we caught. A black and white Wheatear turned up in a nearby quarry but its characters did not quite fit any species in the books, so we put up a net. An expert bit of flushing by John produced a lovely male Rock Thrush *Monticola saxitilis* in the net. We had to wait until next morning to catch the Wheatear which turned out to be a Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*. The crown looked much lighter in the hand than it did in the field. Several Common Wheatears *O. oenanthe* in the same quarry evaded the net so we gave up and decided to have another look at Mida Creek.

This time we set a net encouraged by the large numbers of waders and a light wind. However the waders were not going to be fooled and they all disappeared before the tide had reached its highest. An Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* made its appearance on the mudflats, the Bar-tailed Godwits were still present and we counted 19 Redshank *Tringa totanus* among the Greenshank.

Back at the camp site we caught a Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus* but had to be content with just looking at the Carmine and White-throated Bee-eaters *Merops nubicus* and *M. albicollis*; a sudden storm prevented us catching two Red-backed Shrikes *Lanius collurio*.

All good things must come to an end. I learned a lot during that week and came to the conclusion that a combination of a favourable tide and light winds coinciding with dusk are necessary for any attempts at netting waders at Mida Creek to be sucessful. Perhaps next year?

Mike Goddard,
Mutige Secondary School,
Box 91, Kerugoya.

*The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature has ruled that this is the correct name, invalidating *Sterna tschegrava* (Opinion 904, *Bull. Zool. Nomencl.* 1970, 26:225-226).
Editor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

CLASSIFICATION AND NOMENCLATURE

The production of "A Preliminary Check List of East African Birds" by Graeme & Daphne Backhurst has highlighted a number of nomenclatorial problems some of which arise from situations of considerable biological interest. Some of the issues concerned are unlikely to be familiar to those naturalists who have had no formal training in the biological sciences.

The first problem is "What is a species?", the second is how to name a species and the third is how to arrange the names in check lists.

There is no completely satisfactory definition of a species, but, for most biologists, the term incorporates two fundamental ideas: firstly, that a species comprises a population of animals or plants, and secondly, that the population is "reproductively isolated" from other similar populations. Reproductive isolation means that males and females of different species do not normally interbreed when the two (or more) species occur in the same geographical area and occupy the same habitat, i.e. are sympatric. These concepts obviously cannot be applied to fossils or to organisms that reproduce only asexually, e.g. bacteria, but the special problems posed by these cases need not concern us here. Reproductive isolation must be clearly distinguished from geographical or ecological isolation. Reproductively isolated populations fail to interbreed for genetical reasons enhanced in many animals by behavioural differences so that the sexes of different species do not provide each other with the appropriate stimuli leading up to fertilization. Geographically or ecologically isolated populations are physically isolated so that there is no opportunity for interbreeding: they may or may not be reproductively isolated.

The inhabitants of a particular region usually give names in their own language to the more obvious animals and plants, particularly if these are either useful or dangerous. These vernacular names may or may not designate the same biological entity as the biologist's specific names. They are most likely to do so when the different reproductively isolated populations (i.e. species) are dissimilar in appearance. Different species which are very similar are likely to belumped together under one name until differences in behaviour have been detected. A classic example is Gilbert White's discovery that there are three species of Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus* spp. in England through observing differences in their songs and nesting habits.

Vernacular names can be perfectly adequate for listing or describing the animals and plants of a country by its inhabitants. Once the geographical horizon is lifted, however, they become inadequate since widely ranging species occur in many countries and may have different names in each. During the eighteenth century travellers took back to Europe -

the then scientific centre of the world - more and more specimens of animals and plants from the New World, Africa and Asia which were unknown in Europe and were consequently without European names. It is against this background of biological exploration that Carl von Linné, a Swede, developed his binomial method of naming living things. His method, still in use today, was to give each organism two names - a generic name shared with other species and a trivial name pinpointing the particular species within the genus. Since at that time all educated men learnt Latin this language was used for the names which thereby became international. In addition to the placing of species in genera the latter were classified into families, families into orders, orders into classes and classes into phyla.

The Linnean system of naming is, of course, applied not only to "obvious" organisms such as birds and mammals which frequently, but by no means always, have accurate vernacular names (i.e. ones reflecting sympatric reproductively isolated populations) but to all organisms many of which never receive vernacular names at all. Such animals and plants are only noticed by specialist students who can only communicate their findings to each other by the use of the scientific names. There is little or no point in concocting vernacular names for plants and animals which are just not noticed by most people except in such broad terms as mosses, mushrooms, flies, beetles, worms etc. For birds, however the situation is different. In many parts of the world bird species can be accurately identified by observers with no biological training and no great interest in birds beyond being able to name a component of their environment. The Latin form of the scientific name means nothing to such people and may, in fact, discourage them from taking a deeper interest. Mr. Cunningham-van Someren's plea to abolish all English (and, by implication, all vernacular?) names would certainly not be appreciated by those with a casual but definite interest in living things. Many scientific names are not all that easy to pronounce: I would rather say Laughing Dove than *Streptopelia senegalensis* and Warthog than *Phacochoerus aethiopicus* to give not particularly extreme examples. I agree that it is most unfortunate that the same birds have different English names in different parts of Africa but this is not a serious barrier to communication provided scientific names are used when observations are published. It is perhaps worth noting that some scientific names form the basis of invented English names, e.g *Apalis* and *Cisticola* - both incidently words which are easy to speak.

I have stated that the most important criterion for deciding whether two populations form different species is whether they interbreed or not, but have implied that, in practice, most species are described as a result of the study of dead, sometimes single, specimens by specialists who may have no experience of the living creature. Fortunately in most species distinct structural differences are a reflection of reproductive isolation. The converse is not true: it is just as possible for several species to masquerade under one scientific name as under one vernacular name. Species with minimal, or even non-existent, structural differences from each other which are yet "good" species in the sense of not interbreeding are called "sibling" species. The best known examples are found among insects of medical importance such as mosquitos where, for example, populations assigned on morphological grounds to a single species, *Anopheles maculipennis*, have since been recognised as forming at least six species whose main differences lie in features of the eggs. As far as I know sibling species have not certainly been demonstrated in birds though there are several groups in which song or habits are a better means of identification than plumage characters, e.g. the *Cisticola* and *Phylloscopus* warblers.

A more common problem for ornithologists is that posed by allopatric populations, i.e. ones which are geographically and/or ecologically seperated so that it is impossible to know whether the birds are reproductively isolated or not. Should the observable differences be regarded as variation within a species (the different populations being considered as sub-species, potentially capable of interbreeding) or should they form the basis for the description of different species? In the absence of experimental breeding trails the answer depends entirely on the opinion of the specialist working on that group. A "splitter" will regard them all as being different species while a "lumper" will, pending evidence for reproductive isolation, regard them as sub-species or races of one species. A useful innovation is the term "super-species" for obviously related allopatric populations which may or may not have achieved reproductive isolation. However such forms are treated it is clear that our ideas cannot be adequately expressed in terms of a Linnean name.

Having used all the available data to decide whether a given population is a good species or not there still remains the problem of arranging it in a classification with other species. In the original Linnean hierarchy the various levels indicated degrees of structural similarity. Thus the big "cats" (lion, tiger, leopard) are so alike in structure that they are put into one genus, *Panthera*. Various other genera such as *Felis* and *Acinonyx* (containing a single species *jubatus* cheetah) share enough features with each other and *Panthera* to form a family (Felidae) which shares enough features with other families of flesh eating mammals (e.g. dogs - Canidae; mongooses, civets and genets - Viverridae) to form an order of mammals - the Carnivora. With the general acceptance of Darwin's evolutionary theories classifications became not mere lists in which similar organisms appeared close to each other but had to attempt to show presumed relationships. Surprisingly, this attempt to show phylogeny led to few major changes in the actual classifications since in many cases similarity of structure is used to deduce relationship. Unfortunately, as pointed out by Mr. C.F. Mann, phylogeny (evolutionary relationships) cannot be shown accurately by any linear arrangement at any hierarchal level. The most that can be done is to start with the supposedly more primitive forms and end with those considered to be more advanced or more recently evolved. Within a genus this may imply that the first species on the list is ancestral to the ones that follow: a very dubious proposition since no present day reproductively isolated population can possibly be ancestral to other coexisting populations.

The difficulties inherent in a phylogenetic sequence of species and groups led some authorities to adopt a completely new approach in list making; to list groups alphebetically and to arrange species alphabetically within genera. The pros and cons of the two systems are hotly disputed though much of the discussion is sterile in view of the impossibility of showing phylogeny by linear sequences, no matter how desirable this may be. The late R.E. Moreau, as a result of his study of the ploceine weavers, advocated an alphabetical sequence of species within genera, an innovation described by David Lack as "a procedure as yet too advanced for younger ornithologists to accept." The chief objection to alphabetical listing is that obviously related and similar species may be widely separated - and this is more of a problem in systematic books than in check lists. Some of these difficulties can be resolved by using the super species concept for allopatric populations whose specific status is doubtful but where it is certain that the different populations are closely related.

From the above it should be clear that no list of birds will satisfy everybody interested in the birds listed.

Rightly or wrongly White's list is being taken as the basis for the African Check List that will be essential for the successful operation of AFRING. It is held, at least by the organisers of AFRING, to embody the best conclusions about the relationships of the various sympatric and allopatric populations that constitute the birds of Africa. Whether this opinion will be justified in ten or twenty years time only further research will tell. The most unfortunate consequence for the bird watcher is that the "official" scientific names will be different in many cases from those used in the standard reference and identification books (Praed & Grant and Williams' Field Guides). It is, therefore, essential that the finally published list should also include a "conversion code" so that "White's birds" can be read up in the commonly used books. In the meantime, well established English names can provide a continuity lacking in the scientific ones. Bird watchers will still be able to identify, study and accurately refer to the bird known in English as the Zebra Waxbill whether its scientific name is *Amandava subflava* or *Estrilda subflava*.

J.F. Reynolds,
Mkwawa Secondary School,
P.O. Iringa,
Tanzania.

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Sir,

THE COINING OF VERNACULAR NAMES

Mr. Cunningham-van Someren has recently (*E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin*, 1971, 11-12) drawn attention to some of the absurdities and variations encountered when one uses English names for African animals and plants, especially birds. As birds are much admired by amateurs, I cannot agree that such names serve no purpose here and I agree essentially with your reply to Mr. Cunningham-van Someren's letter.

The arbitrary coining of new names for "each new book published" is indeed deplorable but any such innovations in Backhurst & Backhurst's Preliminary Checklist of East African Birds are clearly meant to help by making names more meaningful (for example White-bellied rather than White-breasted Tit for *Parus albiventris*). If we accept that such names are useful then they should as much as possible describe the bird's colouration, morphology, habits, distribution or ecology. "Papyrus Canary" mentioned by Mr. Cunningham-van Someren is a new name which I coined for *Serinus koliensis* in a note, in press, for *The Auk*. This was necessary as Mackworth-Praed & Grant (Birds of Eastern and North-eastern Africa) considered *koliensis* a race of the Black-faced Canary *S. capistratus*, so that it was likewise given the name Black-faced Canary. There is no longer any reason to believe that these two forms are conspecific and Papyrus Canary suitably reflects the very unusual ecology of this species for which no name was previously availabe. It does not, of course, have a black face.

Few species receive a vernacular name when first described, presumably because of taxonomists' traditional lack of interest in them. But the coining of vernacular names (not necessarily English) when birds are first described might help to prevent further confusion arising with "new species". Such birds will eventually receive vernacular names, so why not from those who coin their scientific names?

Peter Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
P.O. Yala.

Sir,

ON THE USE OF ENGLISH NAMES

I may crusade in vain for the adoption or more ready use of scientific names instead of these so readily invented English names but I feel the need to stick to scientific names is becoming more and more imperative. This idea may upset the novice bird watcher and maybe others, but in the long run it is the scientific name that counts and these are as easy to learn as the made-up English names.

I would like to give an example of the use of English names which have appeared recently as part of the new confusion - this is of very local interest but typical of what goes on.

OTUS IRENEAE Ripley

This species was described by S. Dillon Ripley, *Ibis* 108:136-7 & Plate 1, January 1966, on a species taken at Sokoke Forest (Kilifi) in 1965 during a collecting trip sponsored by Mrs. Irene Morden. Ripley states "this owlet is named in honour of Mrs. Morden". Williams, Field Guide to the National Parks of East Africa, 1967, p. 92, refers to the bird as "Morden's Owlet". Leslie Brown, in *Kenya Farmer*, May 1970, p. 29, uses "Morden's Scops Owl". Backhurst & Backhurst, 1970 "A Preliminary Check List of East African Birds", apply the name "Sokoke Scops Owl".

Strictly the bird should be "Irene's Owlet" or if precedence is to be accepted "Mrs, Morden's Owlet". We can at least extend the courtesy to Mrs. Morden by adding the "Mrs" as is the case for *Scepomycter winifredae* (Moreau) known as Mrs Moreau's Warbler. Mackworth-Praed & Grant No. 992 or Backhurst & Backhurst p. 13. Why not? the bird was named after Mrs. Irene Morden and Ripley calls the bird an Owlet!

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren,
P.O. Karen.

It is a great pity that Ripley and Williams find it necessary to refer to this unfortunate bird as an "Owlet"; as any user of scientific and English names will know, members of the genus *Otus* have never been called "Owlets". Of course scientific names are preferable to vernacular ones but the fact remains that, for birds at least, vernacular names still must be provided.

Editor.

Sir,

A warning about going to Tanzania. Their Foriegn Commercial Vehicle Act of August 1970 and its amendment, effective 1st December 1970, states that any vehicle which is registered to carry six or more passengers is considered a commercial vehicle and is subject to be licenced as such.

I went to Tanzania recently to climb Kilimanjaro (which now has to be approached from Moshi) and was let through the Namanga border post in my S.W.B. Land Rover. However I was caught in Moshi and had to pay the minimum fine of shs. 2000/-. So if you are ignorant of the Act (as I was) do make sure that your vehicle is correctly licenced.

David M. Homiston,
Box 14103,
Nairobi.

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A FURTHER PITTA RECORD

Mrs J.F.M. Horne reports that Dr. Joel Abramson of Miami U.S.A., saw a Pitta *Pitta angolensis* on 23rd June 1970 in the Sokoke Forest, Kilifi Kenya.

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RINGING NEWS

1. I have a reasonable stock of 2.3 mm monel rings which were bought originally for use on small waders. On advice from Bob Spencer and from one personal observation it seems inadvisable to use these rings on wading birds because of crevice attack. I am therefore offering them to ringers at the reduced price of sh.4/- for 50 i.e. the same as aluminium rings of the same size (2.3 mm). I should point out that these rings are very hard and should be placed in the pliers and then fitted to the bird's tarsus. Ringers may find them useful for use in one area so that retraps can be identified easily in the field.

2. The Mbarara Syndicate, now reduced to Graham Harrington and Roger Waterhouse, has now had its FOURTH Palearctic Swallow *Hirundo rustica* recovery:

J 40847	juv.	15.1.70	Muko, Uganda
	/?/	20.6.70	Koprivetz, Ruse, BULGARIA, 43°24'N., 25°52'E.

3. The Ringing Report to 30th June 1970 is now with the Editor of the *Journal*. It contains details of 14 recoveries in Europe and Asia as well as details of six birds ringed in Europe and recovered in East Africa.

Graeme Backhurst,
P.O. Kabete.

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THE FOURTH *ARCHAEOPTERYX*

The fourth fossil *Archaeopteryx* (labelled "Pterosaur") has been discovered in a Dutch museum by the American palaeontologist John H. Ostrom (*Time*, 7th December, 1970). This latest specimen shows imprints of a horny sheath on the three wing-claws, Ostrom suggests that these processes were better suited for catching and slicing up prey than for climbing in trees; by the same token he proposes that *Archaeopteryx's* ancestors launched themselves from the ground, not from trees as has been thought hitherto.

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KIGELIA AETHIOPUM (FENZL) DANDY BIGNONIACEAE

FRUIT YIELD AND BIRDS

Sometime in 1938 one of my staff presented me with a cutting of Kigelia collected from the Kakamega area. This was a stout "Y" shaped branch about 1 m long which was duly planted at Karen where it "struck" and developed magnificently. The tree at December 1970 is about 12 m high with a canopy of some 10 m in diameter. The trunk at ground level now has a diameter of 53 cm (girth of 168 cm).

Over the past many years the tree has produced many long pendulous panicles carrying orange to maroon wine-coloured flowers succeeded later by numbers of the typical "sausage shaped" fruits, these maturing from August to December. I can find no record that the yield of a Kigelia has ever been ascertained, so the following data from my tree may be of interest.

The yield this season, 1970, has been 588 fruit with a total weight of 1326 kg, This gives a mean weight per fruit of 2.04 kg; the largest fruits weigh between 3 and 4.5 kg, the heaviest was 4.8 kg with a length of 52 cm.

The weight of fruit on some branches has been so great that when the weight is taken off by lifting the fruit, the branch springs up 1 m. Fruit have been falling over the past two months so that all weights are of "green" but fully ripe fruit. Fruit from last year's crop are still on the ground, somewhat shrivelled, but they are extremely slow to rot unless damaged by beetle larvae. Sunbirds have found the flowers much to their liking and it may be on this account that the yield, this season, has been so good with virtually guaranteed fertilization of the flowers, for on many "ropes" (panicles), which are often up to 2.4 m in length, there were many bunches of up to eight fruit. Three such bunches were weighed; the first, of seven fruit had a weight of 17.7 kg or 2.53 kg per fruit, the second of four fruit had a weight of 9 kg or 2.25 kg per fruit and the third bunch of seven fruit weighed 14.5 kg or 2.07 kg per fruit.

At Karen the following Sunbirds have been recorded as visiting the flowers for nectar which they obtain either by piercing the corolla or actually creeping up into the corolla tube. There is often much competition for the flowers when a dozen or so birds, of different species, are in the tree at one time: -

Nectarinia amethestina, N. famosa, N. hunteri, N. kilimensis, N. senegalensis and *N. tacazze.*

At the coast in the Malindi - Watamu area, we have again noted their flowers to be attractive to sunbirds and on our plot at Watamu the following have been recorded: -

Nectarinia amethestina, N. olivacea and *N. verroxii*

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
P.O. Karen.29

A NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions are still required for the *Bulletin* and should conform in style to articles already published. In particular, contributors are asked to use scientific names as well as English ones but the scientific names should not be in parenthesis. East Africa has officially "gone metric" and we must follow suit; in future, articles containing non metric measurements will be returned

The following abbreviations of SI (*le systeme International d'Unites*) should be used; please note the absence of full stops and the fact that "s" to denote quantities greater than unity, is never used.

g = gramme
kg = kilogramme
ml = millilitre ("cc")
l = litre

mm = millimetre
cm = centimetre
m = metre
km = kilometre

Temperatures should be expressed in degrees Celsius (C).

Lists of species seen or recorded in an area should be on a seperate sheet or sheets and will be placed in the Locality Lists File which is available to Members in the Library.

Editor.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Owing to the great increase in the numbers of visitors to the Museum, it has become necessary to tighten up the rules and members are now required to show their member's cards and sign their names in the book at the door when visiting the Museum or Library. In any difficulty please ask for the Librarian (who is also Secretary of the Society) or for the Senior member of staff on duty. Complaints should be sent in writing to the Administrative Director, The National Museum, Box 658, Nairobi.

Lake Baringo Lodge - Safari Air Services who own this lodge, have offered to let us stay there for half price if we can fill the lodge for two nights. Accommodation consists of ten double rooms, and the cost would be sh.100/- each for the two nights including full board.

If we can accept this offer and make up a party, I am sure that we should enjoy it. I have suggested 19th & 20th June 1971, and they are holding this weekend for us. Those who would like to join a pary to go there should send in their names to the Secretary, E.A.N.H.S. Some might like to suggest an alternative weekend in case we could make up two parties. The offer holds good for any time during April, May, June, July, August, October, November and early December.

Secretary.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 8th February: lecture by Mr. I.S.C. Parker on Game Cropping. This is the same speaker whose talk on Elephant Biology in December proved so fascinating. The lecture will be given in the Ford Foundation Hall, the National Museum, at 5.15 p.m.

Saturday - Sunday, 20th-21st February: camp at Kiboko, by kind permission of the Game Department, led by Mr. Eric Brown of E.A.A.F.R.O. Mug-ga. Meet at Hunter's Lodge at 3.30 p.m. Water is available for washing, but drinking water should be brought. Those wishing to take part are asked to fill in the enclosed slip and send to the Secretary as soon as possible.

20th-21st March: camp on the far side of Menegai Crater, by kind invitation of Mr. & Mrs. Barclay.

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LIBRARY NOTES

NEW BOOKS - Purchased by the Museum:

Tuxen, S.L. - The Protura: a revision of the species of the world with keys for determination. 1964.

NEW BOOKS - Gifts:

Bastock, M. - Courtship, a zoological study. 1967.
Clegg, P.C. & A.G. - Biology of the mammal. 3rd ed. 1970.
Dale, A. - An introduction to social biology. 3rd ed. 1964
- Patterns of life. 2nd ed. repr. 1964.
Hall, B.P. & Moreau, R.E. - An Atlas of Speciation in African Passerine Birds. 1970.
Levin, R.J. - The living barrier: a primer on transfer across biological membranes. 1969.
Marshall, A.D. - Africa's Living Arts. 1970.
Polunin, N. - Introduction to plant geography and some related sciences. 1960.

Selby, M.J. - The surface of the Earth. Vol.1. 1967.
Stewart, J. & Campbell, R. - Orchids of Tropical Africa. 1970.
Stringer, E. & Davies, J.S. - A geography of resources. 1966.
Teale, E.W. - Near Horizons: the story of an insect garden. 1942.
Thomas, D.G.M. & Davies, W.I.J. - Animal Husbandry. 1963.
Wells, M.J. - Brain and behaviour in Cephalopods. 1962.

SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Charles-Dominique, P. & Martin, R.D. 1970, Evolution of lorises and lemurs. *Nature*, 227:257.

Beals, E.W. 1970, Birds of a Euphorbia-Acacia woodland in Ethiopia : habitat and seasonal changes. *J.Anim.Ecol.*, 39:277.

Bleszynski, S. 1970, A revision of the world species of Chilo Zincken (Lepidoptera:Pyralidae). *Bull.Br.Mus.Entom.*, 25:101.

Boswall, J. 1970, The association of the Northern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops n. nubicus* with mammals, birds and motor vehicles in Ethiopia. *Bull.Br.Orn.Cl.*, 90:92.

Boswall, J. & Demment, M. 1970, The daily altitudinal movement of the White-collared Pigeon *Columba albitorques* in the High Simien, Ethiopia. *Bull.Br.Orn.Cl.*, 90:105

Hyder, M. 1970, Gonadal and reproductive patterns in *Tilapia leucosticta* (Teleostei : Cichlidae) in an equatorial lake, Lake Naivasha (Kenya). *J.Zool.Lond.*, 162:179.

Kochva, E. & Wollberg, M. 1970, The salivary glands of Aparallactinae (Colubridae) and the venom glands of *Elaps* (Elapidae) in relation to the taxonomic status of this genus. *Zool.J.Linn.Soc.*, 49:217.

Klug, S. & Boswall, J. 1970, Observations from a water bird colony, Lake Tana, Ethiopia. *Bull.Br.Orn.Cl.*, 90:97.

Laws, R.M. 1970, Elephants as agents of habitat and landscape change in East Africa. *Oikos*, 21:1

——— 1970, Biology of African Elephants. *Sci.Prog.Oxf.*, 58:251.

Mariscal, R.N. 1970, A field and laboratory study of the symbiotic behaviour of fishes and sea anemones from the Indo-Pacific. *Univ.Calif.Publ.Zool.*, 91.

Michener, C.D. 1970, Social parasites among African allodapine bees (Hymenoptera, Anthrophoridae, Ceratinini). *Zool.J.Linn.Soc.*, 49:199.

Leuthold, W. 1970, Observations on the social organization of Impala. *Z.Tierpsychol.*, 27:693.

——— 1970. Some breeding data on Somali Ostrich. *E.Afr.Wildl.J.* 8:206.

——— 1970, Preliminary observations on food habits of Gerenuk in Tsavo National Park, Kenya. *E.Afr.Wildl.J.* 8:73.

——— 1970, Albino Buffalo Weaver. *E.Afr.Wildl.J.* 8:205.

Van Someren, V.G.L. 1970, Revisional notes on African *Charaxes* (Lepidoptera : Nymphalidae). *Bull.Brit.Mus.Entom.*, 25:199.

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BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
JUN 14 1972
LIBRARIES

Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN MARCH 1971

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IN RESTROSPECT: CAMP AT NGOBIT 16th/17th JANUARY 1971

Forty two members are very grateful to Mrs. V.M. Carnegie and Mr. and Mrs. J.F. Carnegie for giving them the opportunity to visit their beautiful farm over the week-end of 16th/17th January. A delightful campsite had been prepared with magnificent views of the Aberdares. Water and firewood had been laid on, the latter unfortunately remained unused as after a short walk to the local salt-lick - where it is sometimes possible to see several types of big game - the worst thunder storm the writer has ever known broke over the area, which had been otherwise dry for the past eight months. The storm lasted for more than four hours and proved a good test for tents and equipment, but campers were delighted that some rain had at last come to the parched area.

The following morning was quite beautiful, but a trip planned into the Aberdares had to be abandoned due to the condition of the farm roads after the storm. However, members followed their interests in bird-watching, fishing and botany. Fortunately for the plant enthusiasts Mr. J.B. Gillett of the E.A. Herbarium was there to identify specimens and point out plants specific to the area. Some of the more outstanding plants were *Aloe ngobitensis*, *A. secundiflora* and *A. graminicola*, which were all collected and compared. *Monadenium stapelioides* was also identified. Two species of the parasitic *Loranthus* were collected, one with very showy orange/yellow flowers. Only a few herbaceous plants were in flower, among these was a very beautiful *Crossandra* with salmon red flowers. The shrub *Tinnea aethiopica* was also identified.

Of special note among the birds seen were: along the river Grey Cuckoo Shrike *Coracina caesia*, Hartlaub's Turaco *Tauraco hartlaubi* in great numbers, and Mountain Wagtail *Motacilla clara* in full plumage. On the plains: Tawny Eagles *Aquila rapax*, Temmincks Courser *Cursorius temminckii*, Yellow Wagtails among the sheep, and a large flock of Senegal Plover *Vanellus lugubris*. A Thick-billed Seedeater *Serinus burtoni* and a chestnut-throated Apalis *Apalis porphyrolaema* were also identified in open bush and riverine forest respectively.

One member caught a fleeting glimpse of a cheetah. Steinbuck and impala were seen, but the larger wild ungulates and the elephants had taken to the hills of the Aberdares because of the severe drought.

We extend our thanks to Mr. Carnegie for giving up his time over the week-end to organising the campsite and acting as our guide during our stay.

L. Campbell,
Box 14469,
Nairobi.

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REVIEW

FLORA ZAMBESIACA PTERIDOPHYTA by E.A.C.L.E. Schelpe (Selaginellaceae and Isoetaceae by A.C. Jermy, Marsileaceae by E.Launert). pp. 254 including 69 plates. 1970. Obtainable from: The Government Bookshop, Box 569, London SE 1., England. Price in UK shs. 35/-.

Until the publication of this work there has been no general treatment of the Pteridophyta (ferns and fern allies) for any part of Eastern or Central Africa except for check lists for some areas. Although the Pteridophytes of Ethiopia and of the Congo (Kinshasa) are being studied family by family by Pichi-Sermolli and Lawalrée respectively, it will be many years before these studies are completed. In addition, the treatment of these plants for the Flora of Tropical East Africa should not be expected in the next few years. Since Schelpe's work includes descriptions of many East African species which do not occur in the areas covered by the standard works on West African pteridophytes (Tardieu-Blot's "Les Ptéridophytes de l'Afrique Intertropicale Française" (1953), "Flore du Cameroun" (No.3, 1964), "Flore du Gabon" (No.8, 1964) and Alston's "The Ferns and Fern Allies of Western Tropical Africa" (Supplement, ed.2, The Flora of West Tropical Africa, 1959), it is particularly valuable to students of East African ferns.

The work contains descriptions of 273 species of which 228 also occur in East Africa. This is approximately 55 - 60% of the total number of pteridophyte species in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Although unfortunately no key is provided to the families of pteridophytes, keys are given to the orders, to the genera in the families and to the species in the genera. An artificial key to the genera in the order Filicales to which nearly all our common ferns belong is also provided.

Greatly enhancing the usefulness of this work are the illustrations. In all, 138 species are illustrated (120 of which occur in East Africa), representing at least one species of each genus (except *Platycerium*). On the whole the illustrations are of a high quality, but Plate 22 (Hymenophyllaceae) is a notable exception. The detail shown in this plate is so poor as to render it virtually useless for the determination of specimens.

The taxonomic treatment is essentially conservative. Schelpe follows Alston (1959) for the delimitation of families, shifting only *Stenochlaena* from the Polypodiaceae to its more probable affinity the Blechnaceae. His generic treatment is also similar to Alston's with the exceptions of *Notholaena inaequalis* placed in the genus *Cheilanthes* and *Schizolegnia ensifolia* moved to the genus *Lindsaea*. At the specific level Schelpe is a "lumper". As a result, the very distinct *Pleopeltis rotunda* is sunk in *P. excavata*, *Lycopodium aberdaricum*, a species endemic to the Aberdare Mountains in Kenya, is cited as a synonym of the cosmopolitan *L. clavatum*; *Pellaea involuta*, a very clear species in East Africa, is considered a variety of *P. viridis*, and both *Trichomanes melanotrichum* and *Hymenophyllum kuhnii* are treated as varieties (subspecies would appear to be a more suitable taxonomic rank) of tropical American species.

In East Africa this work will be especially useful in Tanzania and Kenya and in the highland areas of Uganda (also Ethiopia), less so in the lowlands of Uganda and in other areas of West African affinity such as the Bukoba Region and the Eastern Usambara Mountains in Tanzania. Whatever shortcomings there may be in this work, it is nevertheless a valuable contribution to our knowledge of African Pteridophyta.

R.B. Faden,
East African Herbarium,
Box 5166,
Nairobi.

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NOTE ON TWO FORMS OF *PAPILLIO DARDANUS* BROWN

LEPIDOPTERA, PAPILLIONIDAE

Over the past few years *Papillio dardanus* at Karen, near Nairobi, have been very scarce in the garden whereas many other species of *Papillio* have been numerous; however, this season, October - November, 1970 *dardanus* both males and females have been extremely abundant. Up to twenty have been counted fluttering around a single *Bauhinia purpurea* in full flower, while many were visiting other garden plants or were seen in the glades in and near the forest edge.

A number of specimens were taken for examination (majority released) and amongst these were two rather striking forms. Figures 1 and 4. Figure 1 is almost a "melanistic" form with extensive black areas and the usual cream of the wings was replaced with a blueish-green tinge in the fresh state(there has been a little fading with time). The underside pattern was very dark without the usual brownish areas. Figure 4 is a specimen virtually devoid of the submarginal black band which has been reduced to a few small black dots on a cream background. The underside is very pale. Figure 2 is another pale form while Figures 3 and 5 show the more typical form of *tibullus* Kirby, which is general in the Nairobi - Karen area. Amongst females the brown and cream forms near *mixtus*, *doripoides* and *lamborni* have been unusually plentiful.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen.

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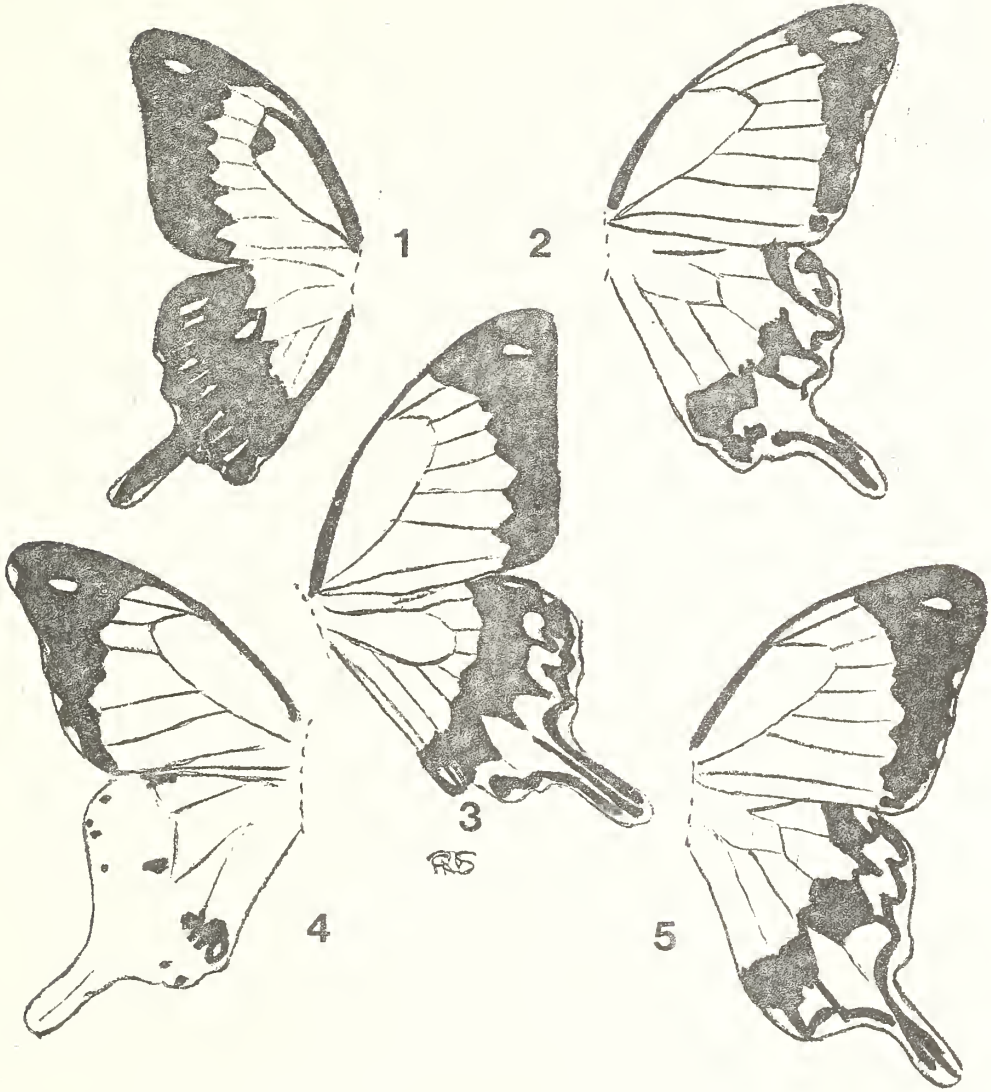
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BIRD NOTES FROM MERU NATIONAL PARK

On 18th January 1971, I was fortunate in seeing a Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanus riocourii*. This bird was hunting a long, dried grass area, over which it continually hovered. It passed within some twenty yards of me in strong, morning sunlight and I viewed it for more than twenty minutes through X 10 binoculars. It was a graceful bird being a pale bluish grey on the upperside and white below with prominent black patches at the shoulders on the underside of the wings; the tail was deeply forked.

A little later, another was seen which gave the impression of being a juvenile as it was more dusky on the upper plumage and did not have such a pronounced swallow-tail, also it lacked the black patches under the wings.

On two different occasions, when going through thick thorn bush down to the Tana river the European Hoopoe *Upupa epops epops* was seen.

The Banded Harrier Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens* was found frequenting doum palms in the swamp areas and, on two occasions the Palm Nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis* was seen in the doum palms.

A White-headed Barbet *Lybius leucocephalus senex* was found feeding on the fruits of *Ficus glomerata* in our camp on the Murera river.

C.E. Norris,
Box 2406,
Nairobi.

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A KENYA NEST RECORD FOR THE ETHIOPIAN SWALLOW

Hazel Britton has pointed out to me that Mackworth-Praed and Grant (Ist Ed. 1955, Vol 11, p.529) did not have a Kenya record of the nest of the Ethiopian Swallow *Hirundo aethiopica* and that a 1970 observation of mine may be of interest to some members.

On 31st July 1970, I spent some time watching two adult Ethiopian Swallows feeding two dull-coloured, short-tailed young on a dead branch jutting from the coral cliff on Diani Beach, (4.18'S., 39.35'E.). Both birds kept flying in under an overhanging crag immediately before feeding the young. Search revealed a newly abandoned nest with fresh droppings. It was on a landward facing ledge near the mouth of the cave and less than 1 m above high spring tide mark where, at extreme tides, it must have received some splashing. The nest consisted of a half-cup of black and grey mud in rugger jersey-like bands and was lined with downey feathers and fibre. Some of the feathers were obviously not Swallow feathers, but

I could not identify them. The fibre was mostly palm leaf *Hyphaene coriacea* but also some sisal and fine seaweed.

The nest was re-visited at dawn on 2nd August and all four birds were flushed from the ledge. While the young were not actually seen on the nest, it seems quite certain that they had been raised in it.

I have seen Ethiopian Swallows feeding newly fledged young before at the coast (Bamburi Beach, July 1968) but could not find the nest on that occasion.

W.G. Dyson,
E.A.A.F.R.O.,
Muguga.

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A RECORD OF THE POCHARD *AYTHYA FERINA* FROM THE ARUSHA NATIONAL PARK

On the morning of 2nd January 1971, I was studying the duck on the dam near my house in the Momela section of the Arusha National Park. Among the birds present, which included African Pochard *Netta erythrophthalma brunnea*, Shoveler *Anas clypeata*, Wigeon *A. penelope*, Hottentot Teal *A. hottenta*, Redbill *A. erythrorhynchos* and Pintail *A. acuta*, I observed a female Pochard *Aythya ferina*.

The next day I visited the dam in company with Graeme Backhurst. We both saw the bird well, and took photographs of it through 300 mm and 400 mm tele-lenses. Subsequently I watched the bird on many occasions until the 8th February when I left to visit Nairobi for two weeks. The bird kept generally to the central, deeper part of the dam, diving a great deal to feed, and resting out in the centre. There is no doubt about the bird's identity, as I am familiar with it in Europe, and it cannot really be confused with any other European or African duck. Colour transparencies of it are in the possession of both myself and Graeme Backhurst.

The record is interesting as it is, I believe, the first for Tanzania, and for East Africa. Its normal wintering range in Eastern Africa is in Ethiopia and the Sudan. This year however, has been a good one for Palearctic duck in this locality, as in addition to the aforementioned species, Gargany *Anas querquedula* and Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* have also been present.

John S.S. Beesley,
Box 3134,
Arusha.

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A SIGHT RECORD OF A NEW BIRD FOR KENYA

On 9th April 1966 I saw a light phase adult Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* (L.) chasing a Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis* Lesson at Casurina Point, Malindi, Kenya, 3.15'S., 40.08'E. The skua flew over my head and then flew out to sea. I am familiar with all skua species and the Malindi bird was a perfect example of a light phase adult with slightly elongated, pointed central tail feathers.

Vaurie (The birds of the Palearctic fauna, a systematic reference, Non-Passeriformes, London, 1965) gives the range of *S. parasiticus* as 'south to the . . . Cape of Good Hope (and along the east coast north to Zululand), in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea,". White (A revised check list of African non-passerine birds, Lusaka 1965) repeats Vaurie's statement. The bird has a northern Holarctic breeding distribution but winters throughout the oceans of the world except, apparently, the Indian Ocean. From Vaurie's detailed account (*op. cit.*) it seems strange that the species has not been recorded on the East African coast before, especially considering that it occurs off Australia, New Zealand, Patagonia and, as already mentioned, off Zululand and in the Arabian Sea. This record is the basis of the species' inclusion in "A preliminary check list of East African birds (Backhurst & Backhurst, 1970).

Graeme Backhurst,
P.O. Kabete.

The checklists of birds of many countries include only species which have been collected. This system is quite normal in many other biological fields (botany and entomology for instance). The situation in regional bird lists is very different: in the British Isles collecting is very definitely "out" and when a specimen is obtained (which is only very rarely) there is a public outcry. As a substitute for collecting there has come into being "The ten rare men" or, to give them their official title, The Rarities Committee, a body of experienced people who assess observers' records and either accept or reject them for inclusion in the British List.

It is known that very strong views are held by ornithologists on collecting and sight records; one apparent anomaly held by Central African workers is that although the first record must be based on a specimen subsequent sight records are acceptable. I hope that ornithologists from outside East Africa will give us their views on this topic: an East African checklist - or at least a Kenya one - is a pressing necessity, but before embarking on its production it would be helpful to have opinions from as many people as possible. Editor.

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REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

THE BLACK CUCKOO-SHRIKE *CAMPEPHAGA PHOENICEA FLAVA*

A preliminary analysis of my records of the Black Cuckoo-Shrike in Kenya indicates strongly that this species is not resident here. This apparent pattern is further borne out by the specimens in the National Museum, Nairobi and the British Museum (Natural History), London. As I have to date traced only one breeding record for Kenya (from Garabani, whose coordinates I don't know) it seems likely that it does not usually breed here. It is a fairly conspicuous species and breeding would surely not go undetected. It may well be migratory throughout much of its extensive range, especially as Benson *et al.* (*Arnoldia* (*Rhodesia*) 40(4)) believe it to be so in Zambia and adjacent areas.

I would greatly appreciate any records of either the Black Cuckoo-Shrike or the Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike *C.p.phoenicea* from anywhere in eastern Africa, including "negative records" from well-worked areas. Please send locality, date (month is adequate) and sex (if known), and where possible please indicate the colour of the shoulder patch in males. Females and immatures are interesting even though it cannot be determined whether they are nominate *phoenicea* or *C.p. flava*.

Peter Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala.

MIGRATION OF PALEARCTIC RAPTORS IN EAST AFRICA

Mr. L.H. Brown has brought to my notice the dearth of information on the migration of raptors in East Africa. Therefore, with the view to writing a paper on the subject, I am requesting members to send me any records they have on palearctic birds of prey, and in particular, *Aquila* eagles. The Rift Valley seems an important route, and members in this area, particularly, are urged to keep a watch.

Any information, even if the species could not be determined, (*Aquila* is notoriously difficult, and complicated by the fact that *A. rapax belisarius* is a resident in East Africa) on actual observed movements, dates of first and last sightings, numbers, behaviour and accompanying specieswould be useful. Any member who has a chance to examine a bird in the hand, dead or alive, is requested to make very detailed notes on plumage and measurements. Mr. Brown informs me that the SHAPE of the spots on *Aquila* is important for identification.

N.B. Now is a good time to watch.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337,
Kapsabet.

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REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION - RESULTS

I am most grateful to all those people who have sent me RARE PALEARCTIC BIRD RECORDS and HOUSE MARTIN RECORDS. The "rare bird" paper is in an advanced stage of preparation but if anyone still has records I would like to have them as soon as possible please. I do not need records from Uganda, just those from Kenya and Tanzania.

Graeme Backhurst,
P.O. Kabete.

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RINGING NEWS

Quite a few birds, ringed abroad, are recovered in East Africa by members of the public: the normal procedure in such cases is for the finder to write off to the address on the ring and in due course the foreign ringing office will notify him direct of the ringing details. At the Ornithological Conference in the Hague last autumn it was resolved that the ringing offices in Europe, in addition to informing the finder, would automatically inform the ringing office in the finder's country. With the notable exception of West Germany no other foreign schemes have responded.

I am therefore appealing to anyone who hears of a ringed bird being found to get in touch withme giving:

a) all the words and figures on the ring
b) date of recovery
c) method of recovery - shot, found dead etc.
d) species of bird

If possible, the ring itself should be sent.

At the Hague one pessimistic observer guessed that only one in a thousand recovered ringed birds was ever reported, what an awful waste of effort! In many countries people are superstitious over reporting ringed birds, some even think it is a government trick for tracing tax defaulters (the reasoning behind this one escapes me though). Duck-shooters and their friends are asked to cooperate especially.

Graeme Backhurst,
Ringing Organizer,
P.O. Kabete.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

CARRYING OF YOUNG BY NIGHTJARS

While my son and I were chasing off stockthieves on Christmas night in the Land Rover, the spotlight picked up the eyes of a nightjar, which was sitting under a murram bank. We found it was sitting on a single egg, later measured as 28.3 mm x 19.6 mm, a pale pinky brown, with darker spots all over. The bird was almost certainly the Abyssinian Nightjar *Caprimulgus poliocephalus* Rüppell, the only resident nightjar seen here over many years.

On 3rd January 1971 the bird was seen at noon to be still sitting on the egg, but at 5 p.m. she had hatched. The next morning I went to atte attempt a photograph, and discovered the bird no longer there, and no sign of the chick. Half the eggshell was found about 1 m from the nest "scrape".

It seemed coincidental that the bird should disappear as soon as it had hatched its egg, and although the chick might have been taken by a small predator, one would have expected to see the parent still around for a short time after. If the parent had been taken as well one would have seen signs of feathers or a scuffle.

An alternative solution would be that the bird had carried its young away, possibly due to the disturbance, or as a regular habit. Although I can find no mention of this habit in any work of reference, I have been told that it does occur. The purpose of this letter is to ask if any of your readers have noticed or suspected nightjars of carrying their young to a place of safety after they have hatched.

Incidentally, the newly hatched chick was fully covered in down, unlike some very young owls. Mackworth-Praed & Grant state that most East African breeding nightjars lay two eggs, but this one certainly only had one, and all the information I have got from others in this country points to most species of nightjar only having one egg.

P.H.B. Sessions,
Lengetia Farm,
P.O. Mau Narok,
Nakuru.

Sir,

ENGLISH NAMES

In the recent discussion on Latin or English names for living things, *E.A.N.H.S. Bull.* Jan. & Feb. 1971, the Editor and Mr. Reynolds mention but, to my mind, do not sufficiently stress an important use of vernacular names.

The Latin binomial (frequently trinomial for birds) with authority is associated with a type specimen and a detailed (more or less), published description. It confers a degree of precision one frequently PREFERS to avoid. If I say: "I tore my trousers in a bramble patch", I probably don't know for certain that the offending bramble was *Rubus volkensii* Engl. and it is quite certain that the good lady who has to mend the trousers doesn't WANT to know!

There are many such examples of semi-technical use: "troublesome Mosquitoes" probably only one species was biting at the time, but most of us cannot identify them at sight; "Cypress Trees" for the rather difficult to identify *Cupressus* spp. In such cases the vernacular name gives sufficient precision for the purpose, without suggesting a possibly spurious accuracy.

W.G. Dyson,
E.A.A.F.R.O.,
Muguga.

Sir,

CONFUSION WORSE CONFOUNDED

Although I do not ordinarily enter the lists in correspondence of this sort, preferring to leave it to those who can understand what they are writing about, the recent correspondence in the *Bulletin* on the subject of English and scientific names prompts me to point out that scientists are no better than the veriest amateurs in this respect. They are constantly changing the scientific name to which everyone has grown accustomed, sometimes because they choose to merge one genus or species with another or, more irritating, because someone has discovered that another scientific name was coined before, say Linnaeus coined his version. Thus we have *Cuncuma* merged in *Haliaeetus* (rightly in my opinion) and *Hieraaetus* merged (in Zambia and Rhodesia, but not in the South African textbook, with *Aquila* - wrongly in my opinion). Again, the hornbill genus I first knew as *Lophoceros* was called *Tockus* after about 1946; I have got used to *Tockus* now and hope no one will change it again. I do not think ornithologists are as bad as botanists in this respect; but you can never pick up two textbooks written by eminent men at about the same time and find either the order of presentation or the scientific names all the same.

No doubt it is all strictly proper, and I know there is a set of rules worked out by learned men to control what happens. But it is this sort of thing that drives ordinary bird-watchers to coin names in a language they can understand. Latin names often have the added disadvantage that they are longer and sometimes laughable. Who could stand up after dinner and say "*Hagedashia hagedash*" a hundred times with a straight face? Ought it not to be *Hadadadia* anyway - who thought of *Hagedash*? Someone will doubtless put me right, but in the meantime Mr. White says it is *Bostrychia*, a genus hitherto reserved for the Ethiopian Wattled Ibis whose behaviour (breeding in colonies in cliffs) really allies it more to

Geronticus than to *Hagedashia*. I can see someone getting very hot and bothered about this some day. Moreover, while one could almost carry out a ceremonial march to the tune of *Hagedashia hagedash*, *Bostrychia hagedash* hasn't the same frenzied ring.

All the same I do agree with Mr. Cunningham-van Someren when he says that scientific names are on the whole simpler to use. Not to be able to use them readily because they are "difficult" strikes me as being on a par with those who find it easier to say "mimi hapana weza" than "siwezi". Except that, of course, "Hadada" is a good deal shorter and more clearly nomatopoeic than *Hagedashia hagedash* (and indeed you may have to add *brevirostris* to make your meaning absolutely clear).

Both scientific names and vernacular names have their uses, and they will go on being used. What we can and ought to do is to try to agree as to which of several possibilities will be used, and then stick to that. I agree that to do so may conceivably be unfair to, let's say Cuvier, but he is past caring anyhow. Once a name has been agreed it ought not to be changed without very good reason indeed, which does not include those all to frequent occasions when someone changes a name simply because he thinks fit, without publishing his reasons adequately. However, even this seems to be beyond the scientists at present, so I am in no way surprised when laymen make up names that seem to them simpler and better. Linnaeus, looking at the present day state of scientific nomenclature would be bound to think that his idea, good though it was, had been pretty well mucked up by some of his successors.

Leslie Brown,
Box 24916,
Karen.

Sir,

CROWNED HAWK-EAGLE *STEPHANOAETUS CORONATUS*

On the evening of 13th February 1971, at about 1800 hrs., my wife and I were returning to the main gate of the Nairobi National Park; about 10 m from the gate we noticed a large bird in a clump of bush very near the road. On getting as near as possible (in our car of course) we found it was tearing at a dead buck. From what we could see of the flesh, the buck had only been dead for a short time and appeared larger than a Dik-dik, but was too hidden in the foliage to identify. The bird was a Crowned Hawk-Eagle *Stephanoaetus coronatus*.

Would it be possible for this bird to attack and kill a young Impala *Aepyceros melampus*, as it was near the spot where an Impala herd is often grazing that we saw it?

J.A. Bockett,
Box 14793,
Westlands, Nairobi.

Brown & Amadon, Eagles, Hawks and Falcons of the World, give a two-thirds grown Harvey's Duiker *Cephalophus harveyi* as the largest recorded kill.
Ed.

A VISIT TO RAGATI FOREST

We have often had occasion to thank the Forestry Department for their plan of opening their Rest Houses to members of the public when not required for official use. One of the best is at Ragati, half an hour's drive from Karatina. The house is very convenient; there are three bedrooms (but N.B. only 2 beds), good furniture for four people, the fire does not smoke, the W.C. works and there is even hot water for bathes. When we arrived we found that a man had been sent to get the house ready for us. In fact we felt as if we were the guests of the Department. It is possible to have a holiday there in great comfort and the surroundings are magnificent.

In front of the verandah the ground slopes down to a hedge, with Grey Apalis *Apalis cinerea* in one corner and the Mountain Yellow Flycatcher Warbler *Chloropeta similis* in the other, and then on down to a swampy area where Bushbuck, Waterbuck and Blue-headed Coucals *Centropus monachus* can be seen. Then it climbs steeply through indigenous forest to the moorland and the great peaks of Mt. Kenya - a glorious view.

As our party contained Mrs. Jean Hayes we had great fun with the tape recorder. I do not know that I can yet distinguish for certain the songs of *Cossypha semirufa* and the Abyssinian Hill-babbler *Pseudoalcippe abyssinicus* which were both singing magnificently, especially in the evening. The Cossypha would always come, on some occasions accompanied by the White-starred Bush Robin *Pogonocichla stellata*, if his song was played back. The Hill-babbler would answer from the depth of the forest, but would not come, and we only caught a glimpse of it. The beautiful little *Apalis jacksoni* will come and Boubou shrikes will go on fizzing and trilling within a few feet of the observers in spite of shouting and clapping of hands in an effort to drive them away. On one occasion even a Turaco *Tauraco hartlaubi* came and eyed the party with interest, although his call had only been part of background noise.

We feel that the expensive places can be left to the tourists while we have better to go to. We can thoroughly reccomend Ragati and hope that any other members who go there will not abuse the Department's hospitality, but will help to keep the house and grounds as clean and tidy as they are now.

P.M. Allen,
Box 4486,
Nairobi.

Members are reminded that we are suggesting a week-end at Baringo Lodge where Mrs Skinner is kindly offering to take us for half price (sh.100/- each for two nights with full board). The nights of 19-20th June have been suggested and a few names collected; but members who cannot come then might like to suggest another week-end. I must apologise for a mistake in the first notice. The Lodge is owned by the Skinners and Safari Air Services are the agents for it.

Secretary.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

In March, the Society is offering a new, full programme of functions - indoor meeting, camp, day trip, half-day trip and weekly birdwalk.

If you want it to continue, YOU must help!!! The Society can provide one "expert" to lead a study trip every one or two months; but you as members, are needed to lead general trips and camps to places of interest. You do not have to know birds, plants or insects, but only to choose an area and make the necessary arrangements.

Perhaps you know a farm where the Society might camp - or would just lead the group to such favourite spots as the Ngong Hills, Lake Magadi, Castle Forest Station etc.

Just contact the Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi or telephone 20141.

Monday, 8th March: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Ford Foundation Hall, National Museum, at 5.15 p.m., followed by "Nature and the Camera", an illustrated talk by the Society's President, Mr.J.S. Karmali.

Saturday 20th March: Afternoon bird study trip led by Miss P.M. Allen. Meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m. Bring picnic tea and, if possible, plan to stay until dark.

Sunday 28th March: Lake Naivasha. Please meet Mrs. Ng'weno at 9 a.m. at Fisherman's Camp, on the South Lake Road about eleven miles from the turn off the Nairobi - Naivasha road. Bring lunch. There may be a small fee for boat rental. Those (who are members of the Society) wishing to camp should make their own arrangements with Mr. M.D. Carnelley, Telephone Naivasha 50Y7 or Ruiru 38Y3. For lift, please contact the leader c/o the Society.

* Please note that the weekly bird walks have been moved to Wedensday mornings. Meet at the Museum at 9 a.m. on Wedensdays. This arrangement is especially for visitors and those not in regular work.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM FILM WEEK 15th - 20th MARCH

Monday	15th March	5.15 p.m.	"Baobab"
Tuesday	16th March	5.15 p.m.	"Mzima"
Wednesday	17th March	5.15 p.m.	"Enchanted Isles"
Thursday	18th March	5.15 p.m.	"Doctor Leakey and the Dawn of Man"
Friday	19th March	5.15 p.m.	"Mzima"
Saturday	20th March	3.00 p.m.	"Baobab" and "Nothing Going On"

Members of the Society will be welcome.

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SECRETARY'S NOTICES

Many members have still not paid their subscriptions; as the *Bulletin* costs something to produce we cannot go on sending it to those who do not subscribe. Next month's issue of the *Bulletin* will be the last to be sent to defaulters, so please send subscriptions before the end of March.

Undergraduate students of the University (but not postgraduate students) may join as Junior members for sh.10/- per annum. They then receive the *Bulletin* but not the *Journal*, and may use the Library for study and reference but may not borrow books.

When the Ford Foundation Hall was so overcrowded at the showing of Alan Root's film "Baobab", the Chairman promised that it should be shown again, but as The Museum are showing it twice during their Film Week, it is hoped that members of the Society who missed it before will take the opportunity of seeing it then.

SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Britton, P.L. 1970, Two new shrikes for Kenya. *Bull. Br. Orn. Cl.* 90:133.
——————— Some non-passerine bird weights from East Africa. *idem* 90:142.
Burke, V.E.M. & Brown, L.H. 1970, Observations on the breeding of the Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens*. *Ibis* 112:499.
Collias, N.E. & Collias, E.C. 1970, The behaviour of the West African Village Weaverbird. *Ibis* 112:457.
Cunningham-van Someren, G.R. 1970, Animated perches and feeding associations of birds in the Sudan. *Bull. Br. Orn. Cl.* 90:120.
——————————— On *Prodotiscus insignis* (Cassin) Parasitising *Zosterops abyssinica* Guérin. *idem* 90:129.
Gillet, J.B. 1970, Additions to our knowledge of *Indigofera* L. in East tropical Africa. *Kew Bull.* 24:465.
Hajela, K.P. & Tanden, B.K. 1970. Species of *Ardeicola* (Insecta:Mallophaga) parasitic on birds of the family Threskiornithidae. *Zool. J. Linn. Soc.* 49:309.
Moreau, R.E. 1970. Autobiographical sketch and Obituaries. *Ibis* 112:549.
Traylor, M.A. 1970. East African *Bradornis*. *Ibis* 112:513.

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BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
JUN 14 1972
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Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN APRIL 1971

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FISHES OF THE KENYA REEF - II*

In the first note on the inshore bony fishes of the Kenya reef (December *Newsletter*), brief descriptions of eight families were given. These were selected because they are well represented in genera or species, or are common; they also all possess more or less unmistakable basic family shape patterns. In this note are described a further ten families which conform to these criteria. While most cannot be called beautiful, representative species of all are likely to be encountered in any random hour's goggling.

9. GOBIIDAE, the gobies, are small (3-15 cm) feeble fishes encountered in rocky pools of the shore or inner reefs, or in suitable areas of the lagoon. The pelvic fins are fused together to form a sucking disc, which is the distinctive family characteristic; there are two seperate dorsal fins, the head is large with prominent eyes, and the body is scaled.

   In spite of their small size, many species cover enormous areas in the Indo-Pacific. Gobies apparently have sharply defined territories which are rigorously defended. They also form close associations with crustaceans, notably shrimps, sharing a home. The shrimp keeps the home and environs clean and tidy; the goby brings in food and alerts the shrimp to possible danger.

   Closely related to the gobies, and placed in the same order (Gobioidea) are the charming mudhoppers (family Periophthalmidae). They are most unlikely to be found along the reef, as their habitat is more or less restricted to mudflats, especially those sheltered by mangrove thickets, where they spend most of their time out of the water. The pelvic fins are united at the base only.

10. BLENNIDAE, the blennies

11. SALARIIDAE, the rockhoppers

    These two families are included in the order Blennioidea and, although easily recognized as such, are mostly difficult to determine even to generic level. They are much alike in shape, habits and habitat, and it is perhaps best to treat them together. (The two families are separated on dentition; blennies have normal, fixed teeth, which are sometimes relatively enormous and fanglike, while rockhoppers have freely moveable teeth set in the lips.). These fish, like the gobies, are extremely common in tidal pools or on the inner reefs which are exposed at all low tides. They are agile and leave the water and hop and skip about from pool to pool in search of food, or when approached.

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* Dr. Bock's first article on the bony fishes of the Kenya Reef was entitled - The Kenya Reef (*E.A.N.H.S. Newsletter* December 1970 pp 52-56). Ed.

Small (3.5-15 cm), elongate, often eel-like, and, unlike the gobies, they are without scales. Pelvic fins are much reduced and always placed far forward; the dorsal fin runs along most of the back. The rockhoppers often have a tentacle above the eye, and also above the nape. Many species show sexual dimorphism, males having a fleshy crest on the head.

12. OSTRACIIDAE, boxfishes and cowfish. Unmistakable, the body is encased in an armour of bony plates, fused to form a solid box, and the teeth fused to form a beak. The flesh of many is extremely poisonous. There are two common genera, *Ostracion*, where the box is 4-angled, and *Lactoria*, where the box is 5-angled (the fifth angle being formed by a ridge along the back). Two species in each genus are frequently seen;*Ostracion tuberculatus* (45 cm, orange, with blue spots); *O. lentiginosum* (22 cm, dark green with small white spots); *Lactoria fornasini* (15 cm, with a backward projecting spine on the dorsal ridge); and *L. cornuta* (30 cm, no spine on ridge). They are slow, and easily caught in small nets.

13. DIODONTIDAE, the porcupine fish, are well known and hardly need an introduction. The common species *Diodon hystrix* (45 cm) is frequently observed throughout the lagoonal area at low tide, hiding in rocky crevices or under *Cymodocea*-covered sandy overhangs. Their teeth are fused into a single unit, forming a powerful beak. The body is covered with spines (which are not poisonous). They are reported to be mostly toxic, though there is evidence that the toxin is confined to the skin. (Experiments to investigate this are not advised.)

14. MURAENIDAE, moray eels, and

15. OPHICHTHIDAE, the serpent eels.

The eels included in these families are extremely snake-like in shape, posture and movement, and are understandably, though quite wrongly, referred to as "sea-snakes". When suddenly encountered, even small specimens are often regarded with emotions varying from mild apprehension to some considerable degree of alarm; for these reasons a rather more detailed note is given.

Neither family is venomous: they are not equipped with poison fangs. While bites are nasty and invariably turn septic, and should thus be treated immediately and competently, there is no question of injection of venom.

The only true sea-snake likely to be seen off our reef, *Pelamys platurus*, is a totally different proposition. This species is very similar to the cobras and mambas (Elapidae) in fang structure and venom (neurotoxin). Fortunately, *Pelamys* appears to be extremely rare along the East African coast. Mr P. Nares, Director of the Nairobi Snake Park, very kindly went through species acquisition records and found only two entries of *Pelamys*, both, curiously enough, made in 1954. *Pelamys* is very distinctive: the tail is strongly compressed into an oar or paddle shape; the colouration is black above and yellow below, with a sharply defined margin between the two, and the flattened tail is conspicuously marked black and yellow.

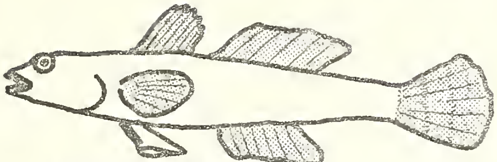
14. MURAENIDAE, moray eels, are apparently fearless, if not aggressive; they have great strength and a savage ferocity. The majority do not attempt to move off at the approach of a goggler (though they will, if prodded gently and persistently, either retreat in very good order into their rocky lair, or make off relatively quietly, but in silent anger, to the middle distance).

    The mouth is large, and extends beyond the eye, and it cannot close completely; teeth are large and fang-like. The body is robust and without scales, being covered by a thick, tough skin. There are no pectoral fins. The genera and species are distinguished almost entirely on markings and colour. Two genera are common at Diani - *Lycodontis* (some up to 100 cm) and *Echidna* (100 cm); they are frequently encountered among coral rubble and rocks, or among dense, tall stands of *Cymodocea*. Moray eels alone are one of several very good reasons why it is extremely foolish to grope under rocks with a bare hand. Their main diet apparently consists of octopus.

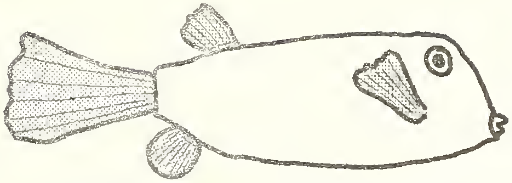
15. OPHICHTHIDAE, the serpent eels (45-90 cm), are more slender than the morays, with pointed tails and a distinctive conical snout. Scales are absent, and dorsal and anal fins are poorly developed. They show a marked preference for the more sandy areas of the lagoon, in close proximity to *Cymodocea* fields. They are able to move in either direction, that is, head or tail first. They appear to be less aggressive than the morays, and mostly make off unhurriedly and quietly when disturbed. Two species, *Myrichthys colubrinus* and *M. maculosus*, are common (see illustrations).

16. SYNGNATHIDAE, the pipefish and seahorses. Pipefish are abundant in suitable localities in the lagoon, and are quite unmistakable. Small (the largest up to 30 cm), the body is elongated and covered with bony plates and rings. The tiny mouth is at the end of a tube-like snout. *Corythoichthys fasciatus* (18 cm) with a swollen saddle, is abundant. It is curious that we have never observed seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.) at Diani. The males of this family show a high degree of parental responsibility in that they attach the eggs to their abdomens, or take them into a special brood pouch, until they hatch. Pipefish feed on the larvae of fishes or minute crustaceans. They puff out their gills, which lowers

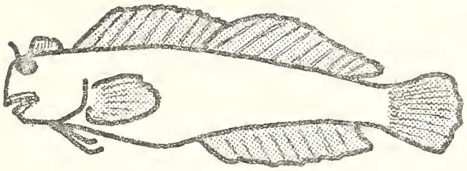
SOME KENYA REEF FISHES



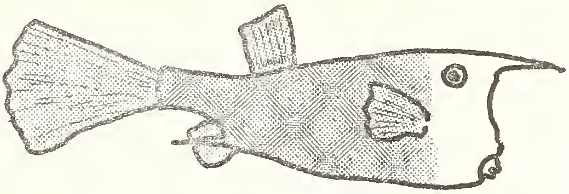
GOBIIDAE



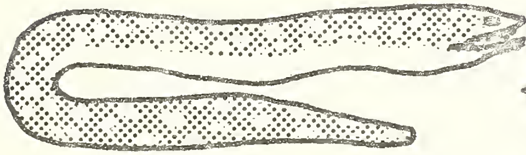
OSTRACIIDAE (Ostracion)



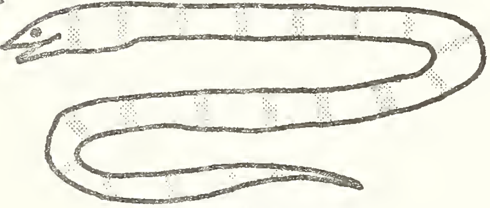
SALARIIDAE (♂)



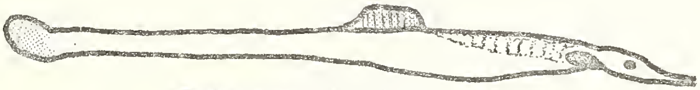
OSTRACIIDAE (Lactoria)



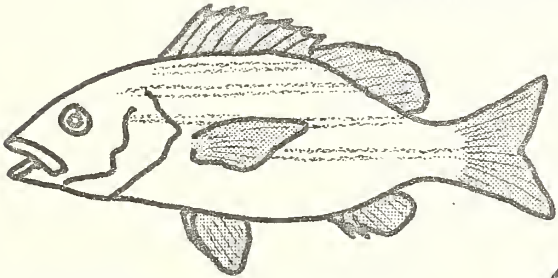
MURAENIDAE



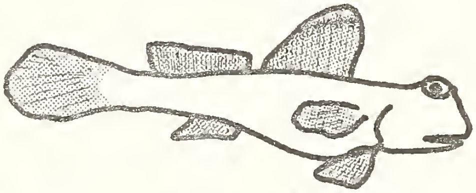
OPHICHTHIDAE



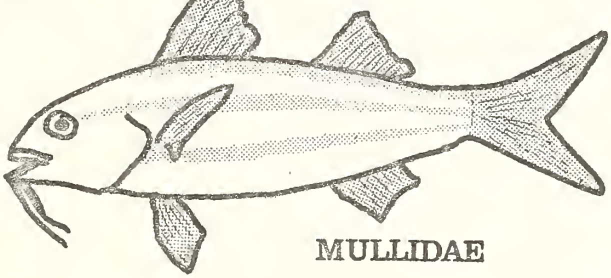
SYNGNATHIDAE



LUTIANIDAE
(Lutianus spp.)



OPHTHALMIDAE



MULLIDAE

the pressure inside the mouth; the mouth is opened and the prey carried in on a fairly strong current of water.

17. MULLIDAE, the red mullets or goatfish, are easily recognized by the two simple barbels on the chin, and two distinct dorsal fins. The anal fin is invariably short. Red mullets are typical bottom feeders, and swim just above the lagoonal bottom with their barbels in constant motion, feeling the substrate for food. They are noted for their brilliant colours (which are useful In determining species) and also for the excellence of their flesh. *Pseudupeneus macronema* (30 cm) is common at Diani.

18. LUTIANIDAE, the snappers. Although many varied types are grouped in this family, species of the most frequently seen inshore genus, *Lutianus*, conform to a basic shape pattern. They are all active predators, with large mouths; many occur in small shoals. When taken from the water, the jaws of even relatively small specimens snap shut with apparent convulsive force, which accounts for their popular name. The commonly occuring species are easily distinguished. *Lutianus kasmira* (30 cm) is brilliant yellow, with 4 or more horizontal blue stripes along the body. *L. vaigiensis* (60 cm) is dark silvery with horizontal Yellow stripes. Two species, both silver, are characterised by a dark spot on the flank. In *L. johni* (37 cm), the scale rows above the lateral line are parallel to those below it; in *L. fulviflamma* (30 cm) these scale rows run obliquely. Many of the snappers are valued as food, the flesh being excellent.

Ken Bock,
E.A.A.F.R.O. (Muguga),
Box 30148,
Nairobi

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Notes on December article: Mrs Pauline Saw of Malindi has kindly pointed out that our common coachman is *Heniochus acuminatus*, and not *H. monoceros*, as I indicated. The line drawing on page 54, labelled as POMOCANTHIDAE, should be POMACENTRIDAE. My apologies for these errors of mine.

I should also perhaps add that while these notes hopefully form an introduction to the Kenya reef, they apply in particular to Diani. K.B.

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REVIEW

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE SNAKES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA by Dr. V. FitzSimons, Collins. Nairobi price: sh.45/50.

Dr. FitzSimons - lately Director of the Transvaal Museum - is the author of the 423-page Snakes of Southern Africa, which was published in 1962 and which is still the most thorough and reliable guide to South African snakes. Few general works have been published on African reptiles; the subject is too extensive to be covered satisfactorily by a brief "popular" field guide.

A total of 138 species and sub-species are included in this latest Collins Field Guide, which is clearly a summarised version of Dr. FitzSimons' authorative 1962 work. It contains little new data but should prove of use to anyone wishing to embark on a study of African snakes. The serious herpetologist is unlikely to find the book of much value as it contains little technical data, but this is hardly a criticism as a field guide of this nature is intended for amateurs and "dabblers" rather than the herpetologist, who relies on the scientific literature for purposes of identification.

As an introduction to the subject, the book serves a useful purpose. The first 37 pages are devoted to a general discussion of snakes, and there follows a "Key to Identification Based on Colour." I found this key of limited value.

Colour and even pattern is an unreliable guide to the identification of some snakes, such as the Boomslang *Dispholidus t. typus*. In the book's colour key for example, the Boomslang appears in four seperate sections under the headings: Green; Brown; Black and Spotted. Identifying it from this key is likely to be a laborious task. In the section of the colour key restricted to brown snakes, a total of 60 different forms are detailed.

In publishing a colour key, Dr. FitzSimons has clearly wished to spare the reader the labour of consulting a technical key based on scalation and dentition. It would have been useful to include a technical key in an appendix to the book. A colour key to the identification of African snakes in a restricted geographical area - such as the Nairobi District - may prove of assistance if only a limited number of taxa are involved; to attempt to cover a larger area using colour as a guide to identification is as likely to confuse as to enlighten the reader.

The photographs and colour illustrations of snakes in the book are excellent. Information is given on those snakes that are found to the south of the Zambesi on the east and the Kunene River on the west. More than 40 of these forms are found in East Africa. The main body of the book is devoted to a brief description of each form (lepidosis, colour, length and distribution) with a short general section under the heading "Remarks". Much valuable information on habitats and on dietary preference is included.

It is perhaps unfortunate that pressure of space makes it impossible for the author to cite his authority for his statement that "when confronted, (the Black Mamba - *Dendroaspis p. polylepis*) often shows great truculence, especially during the mating season." It would be nice to have chapter and verse for this statement, Dr. FitzSimons does add, however: "Its reputed readiness to attack is much exaggerated and is usually the result of interference in its movements."

On page 27, he writes that the speed of mambas does not exceed 5 mph. On page 169, he states that the speed of the Black Mamba "Probably does not exceed a maximum of ten miles or so per hour." Which are we to take as correct?

These are, however, minor criticisms. The author is to be congratulated on attempting to condense in 211 pages so much information. The book ends with a useful distribution table of the Southern African snakes.

P.N.

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IDENTIFICATION OF A PLOVER

On 20th February 1971, at Lake Nabagabo, Uganda, I flushed a plover I did not recognise from some burnt grass. It settled again and I observed it down to about 20 m.

It was rather larger than a Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, but much smaller than the Wattled Plover *Vanellus senegallus*, which was also present in the vicinity. It was of typical plover shape but with rather a long tail. The upperparts were grey. The head was also grey including the chin, and there was a white stripe leading back from the eye to meet on the nape of the neck like that in Kittlitz's Sand Plover *C. pecuarius*. No white forehead was noticed. Below the grey chin there was a white band and below this there was a very broad black band, at least twice as broad as that of a Ringed Plover and maybe even broader. In flight it showed no wing-bar nor white rump, though the edges of the tail may have been white. The eye was bright red, the legs red or pink and the bill dark. The call when flushed was a single "pee".

I cannot find any species like this in any of the books, but I think the nearest is Forbes' Plover *C. forbesi*, from which it differed only in the single very broad black breast band instead of two narrower bands seperated by a white one. If anyone can help me to identify this plover I should be most grateful.

Roger Frankum,
Kibuli Secondary School,
Box 4216, Kampala.

RATS AND EAGLES

A high proportion of the articles and letters in the *Bulletin* seem to be concerned with birds. This can only mean that ornithology is a major interest amongst members of the Society. How then, can I hold the majority of members' attention on the subject of such insignificant animals as rodents? Clearly any account of rats, to be generally acceptable, must be well laced with ornithology, and I hope that the following observations will serve the purpose of at least introducing a few rodent names.

The observations were made between Menengai and Rongai where, if you care to search the sky at any time during the dry season, you can see eagles, soaring at great height - perhaps as many as six or eight at a time. As a rodent ecologist, I was interested in eagles as possible predators, but what puzzled me was, if they feed on rodents, how do they catch them? Clearly, they cannot pounce on rodents from a height of 300 m or more; and, as a corollary, if they do not feed on rodents, what do they eat? At Rongai there is a dearth of worthy prey for so many fine birds, whereas every piece of ground with a fair growth of grass and weeds abounds with a multitude of rodents. The answer seems to be that eagles will sometimes feed on rats, but that their hunting method may not be quite what one would expect.

Mv attention had centred for some months on a field of wheat and Rhodes grass that had been left uncut. A very dense rodent population built up - mainly Zebra Mice *Rhabdomys pumilio*, but also Multimammate Rats *Mastomys natalensis* and Vlei Rats *Otomys irroratus* - so that by the time the field was cut and baled in December there was a lot of meat to be had. European White Storks *Ciconis ciconia* were the first to move in, and by the time cutting was almost finished, about 150 storks were feeding in the field; and on one day, these were joined by another estimated 500 storks which I did not see feeding, although they may have done so. Steppe Eagles *Aquila rapax orientalis* were also present, mostly soaring high overhead, but a few sat about in trees or perched on bales of hay. The most I counted at once was 25. On 10th December I was watching (through binoculars) the storks searching for rodents and pieces of rodents killed by the hay cutter and saw a stork pick up something fairly large and begin to toy with it, finding it too big to swallow outright. Almost immediately three Steppe Eagles descended vertically (so it seemed), brushing the stork aside. One eagle gulped down the object, which looked like a Vlei Rat although it could have been a section of a large puff adder, and was at once itself set upon by another of the eagles. The scuffle was fierce but lasted for only a few seconds. I then went over to the place but could find no more than a dark smear on the straw and a few minute pieces of meat.

More recently I was watching a colony of the diurnal Grass Rat *Arvicanthis niloticus* in a patch of rough ground that I knew was also inhabited by many Vlei Rats. My attention was diverted from the rats by a noise overhead, like escaping steam. Two Steppe Eagles dropped from the air, feet outstretched, into some long grass about 25 m away and simultaneously a harrier *Circus* sp. made off from the spot, empty-footed and at speed. I stood up and could then see the eagles walking about as if searching for something. By this time (perhaps 15 seconds after the stoop) ten more eagles and a Black Kite *Milvus migrans* had reached the scene and were circling around at various heights. I ran to where the eagles were on the ground and both flew off, also empty-footed. Close by, I found several tufts of frexhly pulled Vlei Rat fur. Two explanations seem possible - either one of the eagles gulped down the harrier's kill in the first few seconds after alighting, or the eagles were too quick off the mark and there was no kill - only a scarred and badly frightened rat. Incidentally, at anything up to 230 g, a vlei rat could be too heavy for a harrier to carry.

Both these observations indicate that the eagles compete keenly to commit robbery, suggesting that this may be more than just a chance method of obtaining food. It seems likely that the noble eagle may not infrequently stoop to ignoble deeds.

Kim Taylor,
Box 340,
Nakuru.

REVIEW

GAVRILOV, E.I. & BORODICHIN, I.F. BIRD RINGING IN KAZAKHSTAN. 4

The Ring 63 (1970-2) : 38-40

The fourth report on ringing in Kazakhstan gives details of most of the 17934 birds ringed during the Spring and Autumn passages of 1969. The relevance of this report to ringers in East Africa is that already East African-ringed birds have been recovered either in this Soviet Republic or beyond it (implying passage) through Kazakhstan.

Some noteworthy totals of birds ringed which can be expected to winter or pass through East Africa are: *Merops apiaster* 279, *Sterna caspia* 1346, *Hirundo rustica* 1907, *Delichon urbica* 286 and *Motacilla flava* 260. The high total achieved in 1969 (equal to the total of the three previous years) was in part due to the use of mist nets for the first time.

G.C.B.

REQUEST

I read with interest all the reports published in the *Bulletin* describing holidays, week-end excursions and day-trips to various parts of Kenya. However, I should be even more interested if the writers would indicate where these places are as I cannot always find them on the map.

John Beesley,
Arusha.

HAS ANYONE SEEN *HAPLOCHILICHTHYS ANTINORII* LATELY?

You may well say "who dat?", as, to the best of my knowledge he has not been seen around for some time. To show that I am well up with the current wrangle on nomenclature, I should add that he was also once called *Haplochilus antinorii* and *Aplocheilichthys antinorii*. *Haplochilichthys antinorii* is a small fish found in southern Ethiopia and also Lake Naivasha.

A detailed description appears in Boulenger (Catalogue of the fresh-water fishes of Africa, Vol.111. 1915) and the following is taken from Copley (Common freshwater fishes of East Africa, 1958);

> "*Haplochilichthys antinorii*, common name: Top minnow.
>
> DESCRIPTION. A very delicate little fish with fine scales easily rubbed off. The line of the back is a very easy curve, with a smallish dorsal fin set well back on the body. The eye is very large. The anal is large, and the tail is also large and well rounded. The colour is a brilliant silver, with a pale yellow sheen; the back is darker than the rest of the body, sometimes a blue-black. It is 1¾ - 2¾ inches long (4.5 - 7 cm).
>
> HABITS. This little fish goes in small shoals, in and out of shallow weed beds. It likes a clean shore . . . . . .
> Worthington found a bottom-living race in the open waters of Lake Naivasha: they were very pale in colour, with a large, prominent eye . . . . Their food is plankton.
>
> When black bass were introduced into Lake Naivasha, these little fish were promptly seized upon as food, and within a few years very few were left in the Lake.
> *They repopulated themselves, however, when the black bass declined* (my italics)."

The species is recorded (Boulenger, *op.cit.*) from Lake Arsadé, Adda Gallaland, Suksuk River, near Lake Zwai, and Lake Naivasha.

In the Kenya Game Dept. Annual Report for 1927 Dent made the following comment: - "All round the Lake (Naivasha), for as far out as there is any weed, one finds millions of *Haplochromis antinorii* (he got the name wrong) a small white bait, which are easily collected in a push net of stout curtain netting. At one place I collected about 2½ lbs. weight in half an hour's work. These were dried until they ceased to stick together in a mass; they were then sprinkled with flour and fried. They were excellent . . . ." Again in the same report he states that the Lake had " . . . small indigenous fish in vast quantities."

Tilapia spilurus were introduced into Lake Naivasha in 1926 from the Athi River near Ol Donyo Sabuk (Game Dept. 1926). In the 1930 Game Department Annual Report, Dent recorded that the *Tilapia* ate the small indigenous fish which were identified in stomach contents.

In the 1932 - 34 Annual Reports he records that Bass *Micropterus salmoides* which had also been introduced into the lake were taking *Haplochilichthys*: "Bass of all ages appear now to be feeding exclusively on the little *Haplochilus* (*sic*.) which is Lake Naivasha's only indigenous fish, and which does not appear to have been affected by the change in Lake level, as it is more numerous than formerly; but for how long it can stand the demand made on it by the bass is a difficult problem, and one that is being watched carefully".

In the 1937 report there is the following comment "There are also a lot of Lake minnow." However after that - silence.

I have looked for this species along the south-eastern shores of Lake Naivasha, but have been unable to find any specimens. It would appear that its former abundance has greatly diminished. Has it disappeared altogether?

Could any members frequenting the Lake inform me if they have seen it in recent years. Specimens for positive identification would be of value. People who catch bass might like to examine stomach contents.

Ian Parker,
Wildlife Services Ltd.,
Box 30678,
Nairobi.

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REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

This request is directed mainly to older members of the Society who have kept diaries - particularly those members who belong to the farming community. I am seeking authentic records of outbreaks - or 'plagues' - of field rats that have occurred anywhere in East Africa over the past 50 years or so. All I need to know is the month, year and locality where exceptional numbers of rats were observed. My aim is to substantiate (or refute) the theory that rat numbers are connected with rainfall. Rainfall data is easy to come by but there is a dearth of information about rats; and so I shall not turn up my nose at the tiniest crumb of information - providing its veracity is not open to dispute - in fact, I shall be most grateful for it.

Kim Taylor,
Box 340,
Nakuru.

I am intending to write a paper on the birds of the Kampala area covering everywhere within about 50 km. This includes the whole of the Entebbe Peninsula, but not Jinja. If anyone knows of any information, published or otherwise which could help, could they please let me know.

Roger Frankum,
Kibuli Secondary School,
Box 4216, Kampala.

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NEST RECORD SCHEME APPEAL

In order to prepare a report on the progress of the scheme in its first year (1970) it is necessary for members to send in completed cards. Although I have twice requested that such cards be sent to me there are still many members who have not done so. As I am still receiving cards I am sure that many of you are still "getting round to it". Would the following contributors please send in their completed cards for 1970 or previous years. If they have been unable to use any cards I would be grateful if they could write and confirm this:

Miss D. Angwin
Mr S. Banks
Dr. F. Bell
Dr. D. Cotton
Mr D.L. Ebbels
Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson
Mrs P.W. Francis
Mr J.F. Harper
Mr John Hopcraft
Dr. G. Irvine
Sister T. Joseph (Loreto Convent)
Mr J. Karmali
Mr G. Killing
Mrs S. Leakey
Mrs A. Machlin
Dr. C.J. Pennycuick
Mr Alan Root
Prof. N.J. Skinner
Dr. Strangways-Dixon
Miss C. Trachsel
Mr E.R. Waterhouse

Several of the above showed considerable enthusiasm when the scheme was launched in late 1969 and it was partly due to this apparent enthusiasm that it received Committee approval. Moreover, several have taken fairly large stocks of cards.

Tanzania

At present there is only one member from Tanzania contributing to the Nest Record Scheme, and although J.F. Reynolds' efforts make up for ten average contributors, one person is restricted geographically. Iringa is in the *Brachystegia* (Miombo) Belt with a November - May rainfall régime and his records are most interesting, but data are urgently required from northern and eastern areas of the country. If you are resident in Tanzania and keep notes on birds please help to fill this gap.

Francolin and Guinea Fowl Records

Dr. Wendell C. Swank of E.A.A.F.R.O. is at present working on the factors influencing reproduction of upland game birds and would like information on the breeding of Yellow-necked Spurfowl *Francolinus leucoscepus*, Crested Francolin *F. sephaena* and Helmeted Guinea Fowl *Numida meleagris*. At present there are only twelve records of the above species in the files of the Nest Record Scheme! Many members must have records (if only of adults accompanied by young) and I would be grateful if they could send their records to me as soon as possible so that I can pass them on to Dr. Swank.

Hazel Britton,
Box 1102,
Kisumu, Kenya.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

CROWNED HAWK-EAGLE *STEPHANOAETUS CORONATUS*

I refer to Mr J.A. Bockett's letter in the March *Bulletin*. I was also visiting Nairobi National Park with four American clients on the same day as Mr Bockett's visit and we passed the clump of bush to which he refers at about 3 o'clock that afternoon. I can confirm that the 'kill' was a young impala which appeared to have only just been killed by the Crowned Hawk-Eagle. The bird was standing on the 'kill' with its wings outstretched and was about to tear at the flesh. Our attention had at first been drawn by the herd of impala standing close by and creating an awful noise with all eyes focused on this bush.

A.R. Gregory,
Box 24884,
Karen.

Sir,

CROWNED HAWK-EAGLE *STEPHANOAETUS CORONATUS*;

LETTER BY J.A. BOCKETT, *E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN* MARCH 1971

One morning in January 1968, my wife and I came across a Crowned Hawk-Eagle sitting on the ground, atop a small, young bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus* in the forest area of Nairobi National Park. While we do not know for certain whether the bird actually killed the baby bushbuck, this seems likely to have been the case.

The closely related Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* eats similar sized prey: on 28th August 1970, I saw two Martial Eagles sitting on a tree under which I then found a newborn lesser kudu *Tragelaphus imberbis* that proved to be mortally wounded by what appeared to be the marks of the eagles' claws in the neck (approximate weight 5 kg).

On 5th November 1970, I saw a Martial Eagle sit on the ground eating a newborn gerenuk *Litocranius walleri* (approximate weight 3.5 kg). On another occasion, I saw a Martial Eagle sitting in a tree with a partially eaten adult dikdik *Rhynchotragus kirkii* (no date). All these observations were made in Tsavo East National Park.

Walter Leuthold,
Box 14,
Voi.

Sir,

CARRYING OF YOUNG BY NIGHTJARS

Further to Mr Sessions letter in the March *Bulletin*, there is a reference in Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952) Vol.1 p.678 *Caprimulgus fossii* Hartlaub, which is stated to roll the eggs or carry them in the beak to another site.

I had the same experience with *C. clarus* Reichenow. Two pink, purple and brown speckled eggs were found just off the road at mile 60 on the Magadi road in May,1968. The parent returned to the nest where a series of photographs were taken. Returning the next day with colour film we found the bird brooding two very dark downy chicks with the broken egg shells lying nearby. More pictures were taken and we adjourned to the shade of an acacia for lunch.

After lunch I returned to the nest to continue photography but found only one chick which was dying from over-exposure to the sun. The parent, brooding the second chick, was found about a metre away where further photographs were secured. The parent must have carried the chick as it was clearly incapable of walking or crawling over the rough surface.

On clutch number, could it be that highland birds tend to lay but a single egg? All my records over the past 35 years from Karen and district, Magadi and the low country, have been of two eggs/chicks - *C. poliocephalus* Ruppell, *C. fraenatus* Salvadori and *C. fossii* Hartlaub.

ETHIOPIAN SWALLOW *HIRUNDO AETHIOPICA*

Further records are of two clutches each of three eggs taken by Dr. V.G.L. van Someren at Mombasa, 22nd March 1916 "Catalogue of Nests and Eggs of the van Someren Collection". These are now in the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, Los Angeles. These records of hundreds of clutches of eggs of East African birds will, in the course of time, be made available to the E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record Scheme.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen

Sir,

CLUTCH SIZE IN NIGHTJARS

In his recent letter in the *Bulletin*, Mr Sessions suggests that one rather than two eggs may be normal for nightjars in East Africa. The following records are filed in the E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record Scheme:

Caprimulgus clarus	Rusinga Island, Kenya.	c/2 (at least four clutches)
C. fossii	Tabora, Tanzania.	c/2
C. natalensis	Q.E.N.P., Uganda.	c/2
C. poliocephalus	South Kinangop, Kenya.	c/2
	Kabete, Kenya.	c/2 (three clutches)
	Mt Elgon 2800 m Kenya.	c/1
C. tristigma	Tabora, Tanzania.	c/2

The above data bear out the generalizations of Mackworth-Praed & Grant, although it may be that c/1 is more normal for *C. poliocephalus* at higher altitudes.

Hazel Britton,
Box 1102,
Kisumu.

Sir,

CHECKLISTS AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF RECORDS

Checklists and the acceptance of records, particularly rarities are problems no one has really solved. The Rarities Committee in U.K. is only a partial answer, as many genuine records are not accepted from people without considerable experience in bird identification, and also from some of those known as "pot-hunters" or "listers". A few of the latter types are not always careful with their identifications if they can add another species to their list. With regard to the necessity of providing a description of a recorded rarity, this is not always the answer, as anyone, if so minded, can paraphrase a description from a book. Regarding the collection of specimens in U.K.: I think this should be discouraged (as it is) except in the case of responsible persons in charge of observatories if they cannot otherwise obtain the bird alive or identify it. Anyway I see little need for birds to be collected in U.K. as most of the rarities are turned up by ringers, also so much is already known of British ornithology that little is likely to be gained.

In East Africa however, the problem is not so acute, a greater proportion of observers are more "scientifically minded", less prone to the competitive listing prevalent in U.K. A committee of course should be established whose members jointly are both familiar with the birds and areas of East Africa and the capabilities of the observers. As observers are much rarer here a greater percentage could be known personally by the committee. Regarding the collection of specimens, I see no objection here, unless the birds are rare residents or have a very restricted range. A list of these should be published. For some species, such as certain of the Waders, Honeyguides, Larks, Pipits, Greenbuls, Cisticolas and Raptors, specimens are necessary, although with the last group I would personally do without the record and leave the bird alive.

John S.S. Beesley,
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134,
Arusha.

Sir,

ACCEPTANCE OF BIRD RECORDS

Kenya is indeed badly off in lacking a checklist of its birds, so that for precise information on range, degree of abundance, breeding seasons and habitat requirements one has to resort to Jackson (1938), now 35 years out of date and priced at over £100!

As the admittance of a species to a National list is a controversial issue a compromise is probably essential. Urban & Brown's recent "A Checklist of the Birds of Ethiopia" is very flexible whereas many earlier lists - for example those for Botswana, Rhodesia and Zambia - are adamantly opposed to sight records. A logical follower of Jackson (1938) should have appeared for Kenya in the 1950s, at which time few would have argued against a 'collect or nothing' policy. But this is not so now, especially as so much watching is done in National Parks and Game Reserves where collecting is forbidden. The Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* has not been collected in Kenya but Benson *et al. (Arnoldia (Rhodesia)* 40(4)*)* give a number of Kenya sight records and Backhurst *et al.* (in prep.) consider further sight records. Surely this warrants admission to the National list?

I personally favour a policy which rejects no records out of hand, providing that treatment is consistent and that the circumstances surrounding the record are published. Birds handled by ringers are often considered more acceptable than other sight records, especially when photographed. Such subjective judgement is undesirable and sometimes offensive.

On the whole, Benson *et al.* (*The Birds of Zambia*, in press) have been very objective in accepting only specimens, and admitting some other records in square brackets, but even this meticulous work is not entirely consistent. The Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* handled by A.J. Tree are considered unacceptable in the absence of a specimen whereas

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni*, seen in thousands by my wife and me and subsequently by G. Bell-Cross (see *Arnoldia, op. cit.*), is acceptable without a specimen - safety in numbers! The snipe and pratincole are different cases, perhaps, but such a decision is very subjective.

Peter Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag,
Yala, Kenya.

Sir,

ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF RECORDS FOR A REGIONAL CHECKLIST

A PLEA FOR MORE OBJECTIVITY

Controversy has raged in the past between the "Old Guard" of "What's hit is history, what's missed is a mystery" vein and the "Nouvelle Vague" ornithologists of the mist-netting/tape-recording/photographing era as to whether a bird must be collected or not before it can be accepted as a genuine record, if it is rare or, previously unknown in an area.

Different bodies and individuals set different standards. At one extreme a skin must be produced; at the other, field notes are considered sufficient evidence. A skin, which can be compared with previously identified skins, is not the ultimate proof nor is it more "scientific". The integrity of the collector may be dubious in the eyes of some. One only has to consider the affair of the "Hastings' Rarities", which is still stimulating publication in Britain. The skin gives proof of identity only, not of time and place!

A bird seen, photographed or handled, but not collected is more dubious in that not only does one have to rely on the honesty of the observer, but also on the thoroughness of the methods used in identification. For example, on seeing an unknown warbler or bulbul on the East African coast, one may be tempted to fit it in to a description in Mackworth-Praed & Grant; reasoning that, although it may be a long way from known range and does not fit exactly, it must be in the book. The possibility of its being an unknown form may not be ruled out, but how many people would think of an Oriental species that had received assisted passage? West European lists have been swelled considerably in recent years by North American birds presumably travelling by this method.

In Britain the "Ten Rare Men" method is used to assess records. "Rare Men" must indeed be rare if they are infallible and unprejudiced. In bird distribution nothing is impossible. A Caucasian Snow-cock in the Ruwenzories is admittedly only on the fringe of possibility, but can not be dismissed out of hand. An oligarchic organisation such as the "Rarities Committee" is superfluous. An ornithologist should have the chance of deciding for himself which records to accept for his own work without having them previously sifted by the "experts".

Most of this controversy concerns the acceptance of records of vagrants, which on the whole are of limited importance, although interesting. A true extension of range should be easily verifiable by anyone who wishes to do so.

What has all this to do with a checklist? In my opinion a checklist should be a work in which a person can find the known distribution of a form in the region covered. Since 100% fact is impossible, it should make use of as many sources of information as are available in an attempt at getting as correct a picture as possible of the distribution of a form. "Rare Men" would bias this in two ways. Firstly, because of their own views on where a species should occur, and secondly by being prejudiced against a certain worker. The prejudice may not be a conscious one.

Obviously then, there is no perfect method. I feel that authors of checklists should be as objective as possible and include all species that have been recorded in a region and in the case of rare species, mentioning that they were collected, photographed, handled or only seen. Species proven to be escapes from captivity (not always an easy task) should of course be omitted, or added in appendix form.

Some may think my views rather extreme, and perhaps would like the proviso that extremely unlikely or difficult species be omitted. However, this once again introduces an element of subjectivity, which, after all, is what I am campaigning against.

Clive Mann,
Box 337,
Kapsabet,
Kenya.

Sir,

BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Mr.F.W. Byers of The Entomologist's Record has suggested that you may be able to put me in touch with collectors in East Africa who would be interested in supplying me with African butterflies and moths.

If any of your members can help, I shall be most grateful if they would get in touch with me.

A.J. Muirhead, Director,
The Butterfly Centre,
Plummer, Tenterden,
Kent, England.

Sir,

AGAMID LIZARDS

If any members have records of Agamid Lizards, I would be most grateful for information including details of locality and notes on head colour.

A. Mendes,
Box 124,
Kisumu.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Saturday, April 3rd: Study of a field in Nairobi. Beginners only. Please meet Mrs Fleur Ng'weno at the National Museum at 3.30 p.m.

Monday, April 19th: Two films lent by the British High Commission - "Between the tides" (Life on the sea shore) and "The changing forest" (Forest conservation in the U.K. with emphasis on the beauty and wild life of the older forests). These will be shown in the Ford Foundation Hall at the National Museum at 5.15 p.m.

Sunday, April 25th: Field trip to the Komo Rock area led by Mr D. Homiston . Meet at the National Museum at 8 a.m. This is a morning trip; nothing has been planned for the afternoon, but members who would like to bring a picnic lunch and explore further are of course free to do so.

FURTHER DATES:

Monday, May 10th: Talk by Dr. P.S. Bramley of the Department of Animal Physiology, Nairobi University, on the Roe Deer of which he has made a special study.

Monday, June 14th: Talk by Mr J.E. Cooper of the Veterinary Research Laboratory, on Veterinary work at the Nairobi Snake Park.

Saturday-Sunday, June 19-20th: Lake Baringo Safari Lodge, if we can get enough people to join. The terms are 50/- a night inclusive of full board if we can muster 20 people for the two nights. Please let the Secretary know as soon as possible if you wish to join.

MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS: This is the last *Bulletin* to be sent to those who have not paid their subscriptions. Individual reminders are enclosed for those to whom this applies. If they do not respond, we shall regretfully take their names off the list of subscribers. Undergraduate members at the University are reminded that they can join the Society, or remain in it, as Junior members for sh.10/- a year.

LIBRARY NOTICES

The Library will be closed from Good Friday to Easter Monday, April 9-12th inclusive.

Some voluntary help is urgently neede in the Library. The oftener the volunteer can come the more interesting the work that can be delegated; but even one morning or afternoon a week would be better than nothing. Help is also always needed during the last week of every month to get out the *Bulletin* and address envelopes.

Any member who is not in regular work and can spare a little time is asked to contact the Librarian at the National Museum, Box 658, Nairobi. Telephone 20141.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
JUN 14 1972
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Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN MAY 1971

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A THOUSAND SWALLOWS

The Swallow *Hirundo rustica* is widely distributed in East Africa during the northern winter but there must be comparatively few places where large numbers of catchable birds and ringers occur together. One such area is Iringa in the southern highlands of Tanzania.

Apart from temporary, local concentrations of up to about five thousand birds that spend much of the day on telephone and power lines at Mkwawa Secondary School around Christmas and, sometimes, during March Swallows do not give the impression of being particularly numerous around Iringa. When netting Swallows in the school grounds in March and April 1970 I noticed the birds stopped feeding rather abrubtly a little before dusk and flew away in the general direction of Mr D. Phillip's dairy farm at Kibebe. Some time before Mr Phillips had mentioned that vast numbers of Swallows roosted in a bullrush swamp near the boundary of his land and had done so for many years. It seemed likely that "my" birds were going to this roost which is only about 3 km flying distance from Mkwawa although 11 km by road, but I could not follow up this idea until this season.

Swallows reappeared at Mkwawa on 9th August 1970 but as their numbers never exceeded 30 throughout August and September I was surprised to find many thousands assembling at the roost when I visited it shortly before sunset on 9th October. The sight was impressive; anything up to 20,000 Swallows were circling in a tight flock over the centre of the swamp. Late arrivals streaming in from all directions continually added to the numbers. Suddenly some of the birds started to separate from the main flock in a spiral, almost vertical, descent which channelled all the birds into the rushes in a matter of minutes rather like water running out of a bath. This behaviour did not look encouraging for successful netting but I had noticed that before the main precipitation some birds had levelled off without entering the roost and had flown low over the roost before rejoining the main flock. Although only a small part of the total, interception of one of these groups with a net would provide a good catch.

During October and November, aided by Mrs Phillips, I set my nets in all the rather few possible places but never caught more than 12 Swallows at a time; it seemed likely that no big catches would be possible while the birds spiralled directly down into the centre of the roost.

I was away from Iringa for the first part of December. Around Christmas there was a good deal of rain which precluded any attempts at roost netting until 30th December by when the rising water level had left only one possible site for a net - on a dyke that runs part way along one side of the swamp separating it from a drainage ditch. Thanks to low rainfall this year this dyke has remained above water throughout the rains except for one day when it was just awash. On the dyke there is one strategic place where one 20 m net can be erected between 4 m poles.

The 30th December gave me my first reasonable catch of 25 Swallows followed by: 47 on 9th January, 69 on 10th, 34 on 11th, 58 on 12th, 3 on 22nd 15 on 25th, 14 on 26th; 12 on 4th February, 86 on 5th, 74 on 8th, 31 on 9th, 43 on 10th, 12 on 11th; 2 on 3rd March, 23 on 8th, 75 on 9th, 64 on 10th, 111 on 17th, 48 on 18th, 60 on 21st and 23 on 24th. These with smaller numbers caught during October and November, plus some caught at Mkwawa gives a grand total of 1048 ringed to date. Except for the last few catches all the bigger ones have coincided with a rising moon when, apparently, more birds come in low from the edge rather than spiralling directly into the centre of the roost. Latterly there has also been a tendency to roost nearer the edge which has resulted in some of the 'spirallers' being caught.

During March I have several times seen Hobbies *Falco subbuteo* 'attending' the gathering Swallows, but no attempts to take Swallows were seen until 24th March when three started flying at netted Swallows while I was removing the catch from the net. Two of these were caught but one got away while I was, rather painfully, extracting the other.

Whether this rather massive ringing operation will yield recovery data comparable to those of the Mbarara Syndicate in Uganda, only time will tell. To date I have retrapped three of my own birds at Kibebe (J.34546 ringed Mkwawa 17.3.70 retrapped 9.3.71; J.50521 and J.47590 ringed at Kibebe 12.1.71 and 8.3.71 retrapped 21.3.71 and 17.3.71 respectively.) and have controlled one Russian-ringed bird whose details have not yet been received from Moscow.* What may be of greater significance than recoveries in the long run is the very strong indication that, in southern Tanzania at any rate, there is some segregation of age groups. 718 of the 1048 birds ringed have certainly been in their first year and it is likely that at least half of the 168 rated as FG (Full Grown) have been first year birds as well. In a sample of just over a thousand a ratio of approximately 53 juveniles (first year birds) to one adult is difficult to explain otherwise.

I am much indebted to Mr Phillips for giving me unrestricted access to his land for ringing, watching and photographing birds while I have been in Iringa.

J.F. Reynolds,
Mkwawa Secondary School,
Private Bag, Iringa

* See "Ringing News" in this issue. Ed.

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SOMALI BEE-EATER IN TSAVO EAST NATIONAL PARK

On 7th April 1971 we watched two Somali Bee-eaters *Merops revoilii* on a low bush close to Lugard's Falls in Tsavo East National Park, Kenya. The map in Mackworth-Praed & Grant's "Birds of Eastern and North-Eastern Africa" indicates that it occurs south to the equator whereas Lugard's Falls lie on the Galana River at 3.30'S. Williams' "A Field Guide to the National Parks of East Africa" does not list it for Tsavo.

Peter and Hazel Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala.
Kenya.

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REVIEW

DEAN, A.J. (1971) *Africana* 4(5) : 19 LAKE POLLUTION. ANOTHER LOOK AT NAKURU.

Mr Dean is to be congratulated on writing this short common sense article to balance the flood of irresponsible fiction that has been appearing in the popular press in Kenya recently concerning "pollution" in Lake Nakuru.

Pollution has only just caught on in Kenya after receiving years of limelight in North America and Europe. Make no mistake, pollution is a threat to wildlife and man throughout the world and it is something against which everybody should guard. But to guard against pollution one should be in possession of equipment and staff able to monitor minute quantities of pollutants - whether of insecticidal or industrial origin. Equipment is available in Kenya capable of fulfilling these criteria (Gas Liquid Chromatographs), and, as Mr Dean States "Preliminary analyses of the lake water undertaken in the Pyrethrum Marketing Board's Laboratories in Nakuru reveal no toxic substance whatsoever." Why then have the active anti-pollution brigade chosen not to make known this information ? Why then have they stated or implied that sewage flowing in to the Lake is harmful ? As Mr Dean says "The birds that feed in the marshy foreshore adjacent to the outflow are evidence that the ground is not poisoned." Sewage farms are well known to be excellent places for birds.

A classic case to illustrate the melodramatic and inaccurate reporting of "pollution" is afforded by the *Kenya Farmer* 176 : February 1971; the cover picture shows a dead pelican with the caption "A pelican lies dead - a victim of water pollution in Lake Nakuru ......". Within the magazine on p.13 in the article "Pollution: Pelican deaths lead to Kenya controversy" by Mr Godwin Wachira, a similar photograph of a dead pelican (probably the same bird) is captioned "A dead pelican believed to have been killed because of pollution in Lake Nakuru."

Surely everybody is concerned that pollution does not run riot in East Africa; it will not help the cause by inventing explanations for events that may well be natural (pelicans do die sometimes of old age, strangely enough). Mr Dean's article is, as far as I am aware, the first resumé of the situation to be published in Kenya. May we hope that in future the Editors of the more popular magazines, including the daily Press, insist on factual articles dealing with pollution in which the authors substantiate their claims.

GCB.

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CORRIGENDUM

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN, 1971, 27 : line 3 : species should be specimen

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A WATERBIRD COLONY IN TANZANIA

I think that the following record, although late, has not lost its interest. On 29/30th July 1968 I was taken by Dr. A. von Nagy of Usa River to see a nesting-site of various species of Herons, Storks and Ibises at the southern end of Lake Manyára, Tanzania. This was situated between the Great North Road and the lake, about 600 m from the water's edge, in a group of nine almost full-grown Yellow-bark Acacias *Acacia xanthophloea* and a thicket of about forty saplings of the same species some three to five metres high. The surrounding country was open alkaline grassland, relieved only by a few scattered clumps of trees, none of which apart from the ones mentioned bore any nests. A couple of years previously this area was part of the homeland of the Wambugwe people, who were moved away because of the high prevalence of bilharzia and malaria, and the rapidly diminishing quantity of pasture due to overgrazing.

The species and numbers breeding were approximately as follows, the figures being approximate as it was often difficult to assess the ownership of a nest:

Grey Heron	*Ardea cinerea*	4
Black-headed Heron	*A. melanocephala*	3
Cattle Egret	*Ardeola ibis*	50
Great White Heron	*Egretta alba*	5
Little Egret	*E. garzetta*	25
Yellow-billed Egret	*E. intermedia*	20
Open-bill	*Anastomus lamelligerus*	160
Yellow-billed Stork	*Ibis ibis*	4
African Spoonbill	*Platalea alba*	20
Sacred Ibis	*Threskiornis aethiopica*	16

Breeding stages varied from building to feeding young. The Cattle Egrets, Open-bills and Sacred Ibises were the most advanced, many young of the former species were walking about on the ground under the nests, and a few were hanging dead, caught by thorns in their wings. The lowest nests, a few being only one and a half metres from the ground, belonged to some of the Cattle Egrets, Sacred Ibises and African Spoonbills.

Not all the food-searching was done in and around the lake, many birds were coming in from the direction of Lake Burungi and the Tarangire. A later visit to the Tarangire swamps found many of the Open-bills who were picking up the abundant snails.

This site was not used again, and I was informed that in 1969 another was found several km further north. From this and two other sites known which were used for one year only, I would infer that these birds and many other water-fowl are, to some extent, opportunists and will occupy new sites if conditions there are favourable for breeding.

John S.S. Beesley,
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134, Arusha.

OCCURRENCE OF THE ASIATIC DOWITCHER IN KENYA

The Asiatic Dowitcher or Snipe-billed Godwit *Limnodromas semipalmatus* (Blyth) has not been recorded previously in Africa so far as can be traced although it has been noted at Aden (Paige (1965) *Ibis* 107 : 95-97).

The bird was first seen by Smart on 20th November 1966 at Lake Nakuru Kenya, 0.20'S., 36.05'E. and by both authors the next day; it could not be found after 21st November. The bird was located at the mouth of the Njoro River (NW corner of the Lake) feeding in shallow water over a muddy bottom. The general appearance was of a Godwit (*Limosa* sp.) - sized wader but in flight there was no noticeable wing or tail pattern (thus ruling out the other two *Limnodromas* spp.). Paige's notes and sketches were consulted in the field on the second day while we were watching the bird and the Nakuru bird was very similar indeed to the Aden one.

Observations were made at a range of c. 50 m through 8x binoculars in good light. In size it was compared with adjacent Ruffs *Philomachus pugnax* (Linn.), it was considerably taller and rather larger in body. The legs were black and the long thick snipe-like bill was dark brownish-black. The bill seemed straighter and not so slender as illustrated by Paige, but likewise seemed to be slightly uptilted with a slightly down-curved tip. The tip was noted as being slightly swollen when the bird was viewed from behind. The heavy bill was the outstanding feature of the bird and enabled it to be picked out from other waders at a great distance. The snipe-like profile of the head was accentuated by a high domed forehead. In flight there was no marked wing or tail pattern; the whole rump and tail appeared closely barred and the secondaries and inner primaries were slightly paler than the rest of the wing (exactly as shown by Paige), showing up as a pale sandy area on the closed wing. On close examination the back was seen to be buff with rather irregular blackish markings. On one occasion when alarmed it elongated its neck before flying away, when the lower neck from behind appeared paler than the upper part. A faint pale eye streak was present but was not conspicuous. The underparts were generally whitish and the under wing-coverts appeared white in flight. In flight the legs protruded beyond the tail, but not markedly so, and the head was kept tucked in with the long bill held horizontal or very slightly downwards.

While under observation the bird was feeding continuously in shallow water with the same wooden action well described by Paige. The bill was plunged into the water up to the hilt without wetting the head, lifted out after each thrust, often with a forward flick, and the food swallowed with a quick gobbling motion; at no time was the body immersed. The bird uttered no call note while under observation.

This appears to be the first record of the species in Africa although there have been two previous "possibles" mentioned in the extract below by John G. Williams, *Africana* June 1965, vol.2 No.4:39 "Globe-Spanners Extraordinary"

'The first suggestion that this rare species (Siberian Dowitcher

Limnodromas semipalmatus) might sometimes reach East Africa was made by Count Bjorn von Rosen, who described a bird he observed in Ethiopia which may well have been a Siberian Dowitcher. Then, a year or so later, Mr Derek Fleetwood, late mammalogist at the National Museum, Nairobi, told me about a wading bird which he had watched at close quarters. It was very tame and he got to within fifteen yards of it, at the hot springs, Lake Magadi, he said. It was the right size and it stuck its bill vertically into the mud! I arrived at Lake Magadi early the following day, but alas I did not find the bird he had described so vividly'.

J.B. Smart,
Formerly of Forest Department,
Nairobi.

Alec Forbes-Watson,
Curator of Ornithology,
National Museum,
Box 658, Nairobi.

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A TANZANIAN RECORD OF KNOT *CALIDRIS CANUTUS*

On 17th November 1970 I was watching a large mixed flock of palearctic waders roosting along the embankments of a salt pan about 10 km north of Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania.

The salt pan, one of several along this coast, is situated a few hundred metres inland of the high water mark behind the mangrove belt and is used by waders as a roost at high tide when the tidal flats are under water.

Among a party of Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* I noticed three Knot in winter plumage. Although I am very familiar with the species from Eastern England this was my first (and to date my only) sighting on the East African coast.

The Knot were readily distinguishable by their "sandpiper" shape and relatively long bills. They most closely resembled large, stocky Sanderling *Calidris alba* but with darker grey upperparts and no black on the wing shoulder. In flight they revealed darker flight feathers and narrow white wingbars while the rumps and tails, though not white were decidedly paler than the mantle. The bills were black and straight, about the same length in proportion to the heads as in Sanderling. The legs were relatively short emphasising the heavy-bodied appearance. In size they most closely approached male Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* but the greyish upperparts, heavy short-necked build and short legs made confusion impossible.

When flushed they were not heard to call but flew up in a close group and circled the salt pans among the other disturbed waders. At one stage they were joined by two other birds of similar size and build. These were probably a further two Knot but they were too distant to make identification certain. All five birds then headed east towards the sea and I never saw them again.

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar-es-Salaam.

A BIRD SHOWER PARTY

At Karen, on 25th March around 14.45 hours, in the garden by my laboratory, my gardener was watering plants in the sunken plant house with a light hose and spray. He called our attention to the large number of birds which had taken advantage of the artificial rain he was producing and in which they were taking a much needed shower.

The disturbance of our approach caused the birds to congregate in a nearby bush into which gardener Mwniki quietly directed his spray. Those birds in the bush and many others from outside quickly gathered to take what was very obviously a much appreciated and refreshing shower. Mwniki was able to approach within a metre of dozens of White-eyes *Zosterops senegalensis kikuyuensis* which, calling loudly, entered the spray, fluffed their feathers and got really soaked.

All this took place in the presence of three of us plus a dog from a distance of not more than two metres. At one time I counted over thirty birds in the spray zone.

A pair of Grosbeak Weavers *Amblyospiza albifrons* joined the party and I was able to direct a fairly coarse spray over them to which they responded at once by spreading their tails and wings while fluffing out their feathers. After a little preening they returned to the shower.

This bird showering lasted well over half an hour, then gradually, in small parties the birds left to continue their search for food.

Shade temperature at the time was: Dry Bulb 24.4 C and Wet Bulb 15.6 C = Rh of 40%. The day had been very hot and overcast, threatening rain, which never fell. Huge parties of White-eyes, sometimes over fifty birds at a time, have been drinking and bathing, three and four times a day at our bird bath over the past weeks of hot sultry weather.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen.

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THE FIRST RECORD OF THE BLACK-WINGED PRATINCOLE FOR KENYA

On October 12th 1969, I found the squashed corpse of a Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni* on a dirt road between Lessos and Kaptagat, Uasin Gishu District, Kenya, 3.30'N., 35.25'E. It had been dead for a few hours. I examined it and identified it as this species by its black axillaries and under-wing coverts. I know both this species and *Glareola pratincola*, although I am much more familiar with the latter. Because the corpse was in bad condition, and I did not realise at the time that it had not previously been recorded in Kenya, I did not take it as evidence.

Mackworth-Praed & Grant record it from Uganda, Sudan and British Somaliland (now Northern Somalia). In their later works (1962, 1970) they state - "in non-breeding season to Africa throughout except the greater part of eastern Africa." - Sclater (1924) and White (1965) concur.

Owing to the difficulty of separating these two species in the field, the deep chestnut under-wing of *G. pratincola* looks black in certain lights, it is possible that *G. nordmanni* occurs more frequently in eastern Africa than the literature suggests.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337, Kapsabet,
Kenya.

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A RECORD OF THE SHORT-EARED OWL *ASIO FLAMMEUS* (PONTOPPIDAN) FROM KENYA

According to Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952) the Short-eared Owl occurs in Africa in winter as far south as the Sudan, northern Somalia and Ethiopia. It does not seem to come as far south as the equator. Accordingly a record from Watamu, Kenya, is of interest.

On 5th January 1971, when big game fishing with D.L.W. Sheldrick some 3 km out to sea off the mouth of Mida Creek, a large pale brown owl was seen flying in towards the shore from further east. My immediate reaction was that it was a Short-eared Owl, and I am familiar with the species in U.K. and elsewhere. On checking the skins in the National Museum, and illustrations in several books, it appears clear that this identification was, in fact, correct and that this a definite sight record of this species about 3.30'S. of the Equator.

The owl was flying in towards the coast from out to sea at about 07.30 hrs. It appeared likely that dawn found it over the ocean, and that it was making for land, which it could see. The only other species of about the same shape is the Algerian race of the African Marsh Owl *Asio capensis* but this species is much greyer than the bird seen and, although a migrant, would be unlikely to occur out to sea, whereas a migrant Short-eared Owl from Asia could well appear in such a way.

On 3rd January 1971, in the same area, I saw a Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* flying south about 800 m offshore. I have seen more than one individual of this species at Watamu. Those seen have been large, apparently not *F.p. minor*, and are also probably migrants from Eurasia.

Leslie Brown,
Box 24916,
Karen, Kenya.

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CHIFFCHAFFS IN KENYA

That the Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* occurs only extra-limitally in Kenya is apparent from both Ticehurst (1938) and Vaurie (1959). Jackson (1938), Meinertzhagen 91937) and Ticehurst (*loc. cit.*) record the only specimens while Benson (1945) and Sessions (1967) have recorded it in song. It is noteworthy that all but one of the foregoing are from high elevations (*c.* 2000 - 3700 m) and the exception is an April bird probably on passage.

On 20th January 1971, in the forest zone of Mount Kenya at a height of *c.* 3100 m on the Naro Moru route we heard at least three Chiffchaffs singing. They were apparently in the canopy of the dense forest, but we were unable actually to see any of those heard. In each case the song was the typical "chiff-chaff-chiff-chiff-chaff" repeated many times, but with and irregular sequence of the two notes. In addition to the song the call note "Wheet" (a plaintive single note, not the almost di-syllabic "hooeet" typical of Willow Warblers *P. trochilus*) was heard several times, but again the birds could not be seen. Small *Phylloscopus* warblers resembling Chiffchaffs were seen, but in no case did these call. It seems likely therefore that others besides the three heard singing were also present, and as only a small area of forest was covered, one may speculate on the numbers that might have been present on the mountain.

It should be added that while none of us is familiar with the Ethiopian avifauna we are all familiar with that of the western Palearctic, and in particular with this species, which is a common summer visitor to areas in which we live.

P. J. Oliver, D.L. Davenport, A.Gibbs and C.E. Wheeler,
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East Molesey, Surrey.
England.

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SHALLOW SOIL VEGETATION IN THE REGION OF NAIROBI

I was, of course, very interested to read Kishor Modha's contribution to the *Journal* (*J.E.Afr. nat.Hist.Soc.* XXV11 No.1 (119) : 1 - 6) on the above subject, and in this context would like to comment briefly on a similar area near Nairobi.

The small region I have in mind is on the north-west slope of the Ngong Hills, on the left of the road before it descends to the Rift Valley plain. Here *Grewia similis, Ochna* sp. and *Solanum* sp. (near *S. incanum*) were found on or near the edge of the escarpment, while behind on flatter ground *Coleus caninus* was common in patches, together with a number of other small species not recorded in the National Park, such as *Dicliptera napierae* and *Hibiscus aponeurus*. I do not know what the soil depths are in this particular area, but because of the similarity of some of the vegetation to that mentioned in Mr Modha's study and the rocky appearance of the ground, it might be interesting to take soil measurements there.

While on this subject, I would like to record that, after the publication of The Wild Flowers of the Nairobi National Park, the attractive mauve *Moraea carsonii* of the Iris family was found on very shallow ground at the western end of the Park (apparently only flowering spasmodically). It was also found in the area on the Ngong Hills mentioned above, where it flowered more regularly, coming up in thin rock cracks.

S. Heriz-Smith,
63 Coniston Avenue,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent, England.

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THE JOURNAL OF THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY AND NATIONAL MUSEUM

The first two numbers of the new-style *Journal* are being sent out with this issue of the *Bulletin* , others will follow as they become available.

At the end of the year a title page will be issued so that the years' papers may be bound together.

INDEX TO THE *JOURNAL*

The Index to Vol. 18 - 27 (Nos. 81 - 118) is now ready and will be sent free of charge to any member who asks for it. Institutional members and those exchanging Journals with us are receiving it as a matter of course.

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REVIEW

ALONG THE WATER"S EDGE. Part One of a series on the birds of East Africa.
Dean, Anthony J. (1971) *Africana* 4(5) : 16-19.

Although neither the title nor the text actually mentions Lake Nakuru, it can be assumed from certain clues that Mr Dean's article is based on his observations in the Nakuru National Park; why the name of the locality has been kept secret is baffling. The text, written in an unusual *staccato* style, is supplemented by seven colour photographs.

The text contains a number of statements which Mr Dean has not substantiated, a selection is given below.

In his fourth paragraph Mr Dean claims that Little Stints fly from "the Equator to far beyond the Arctic Circle in Siberian Tundra" in ten weeks; it would be interesting to know on which ringing recoveries he bases his timing of ten weeks; in fact, there have been no ringing recoveries of Little Stints between Kenya and Siberia or between Siberia and Kenya. In the next paragraph the author states - "Some [Little Stints] have not had time to shed their summer plumes;" bviously he is describing August or September birds yet nowhere in the article is there any mention of dates; this is regrettable since the magazine itself is dated March/April. He goes on to imply that the Curlew Sandpipers go to Sevenaya Zemlya (proof ?); that the Ruffs "have dropped their fabulous ruffs somewhere in the Nile", what proof that they moulted their ruffs in the Nile; why "fabulous" ? the males' ruffs are real enough; what proof that the ruffs at Lake Nakuru come via the Nile at all ?, He states that they have come from Sweden, Norway, Finland, Russia, Germany and Denmark; to be sure, the species breeds in all these countries (and more besides) but there is no proof that the East African birds originate in any of the countries except the U.S.S.R.

In mentioning the Black-tailed Godwit he writes that it turns its head "through an impossible 180° "; how then does it manage it ? "Impossible" surely means "not possible". A choice paragraph, typical of the whole article is worth quoting in full (because it is so short):-

"Here on the open shore there is no shelter, no camouflage, fear is normal. I saw a *Peregrine* yesterday. A splendid meal - *Godwit*".

Are we to infer that Mr Dean has seen a Peregrine eating or killing a Godwit ? Earlier Mr Dean has had something interesting to say about Curlew Sandpipers; "Beaks nicely curved down, to suit some mathematical formula to do with radius of curvature."

The most serious criticism concerns the mention (and photograph) of the Spotted Redshank; nobody has yet bothered to record the first record of this species in East Africa, i.e. a sighting of a Spotted Redshank is of considerable interest, yet here, in *Africana*, Mr Dean gives a "record" of one plus a photograph, without even mentioning the country, locality, or date. As R. J. Dowsett comments in a letter elsewhere in this *Bulletin*:

". . . the documentation of bird records from East Africa (one of the best-worked parts of Africa) leaves much to be desired."

It can only be hoped that in future articles Mr Dean will try to incorporate more facts instead of making so many anthropomorphic statements such as this last quotation:

"Two *Reeves* - the females, bicker, heads down facing each other, a few swear words. One probably cut the other in full flight during the final approach - women pilots !

Exclamation mark indeed.

GCB

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LIBRARY OF WILDLIFE SOUNDS

Now that sufficient funds are available for the Society's publications your Executive Committee has agreed that money collected by subscription to the Myles North Memorial Fund can be used for a purpose more appropriate to the memory of this great ornithologist and sound recordist.

A wildlife sound library is to be set up and to start off the venture, Mr John Karmali has very generously donated a complete set of recording and playback equipment which will shortly be installed.

We intend that the library should be as comprehensive as possible containing recordings of all aspects of wildlife - mammals, birds, reptiles, insects etc.

Your further contributions to the fund will be welcome. We shall need more equipment for copying at a later date and, of course, there is the continuing need for new tapes.

More details of the scheme will be published later; in the meantime, would any recordist interested in supplying tapes of wildlife sounds to the library please contact the undersigned.

Jean Hayes,
Box 2004,
Nairobi.

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NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Please see the IMPORTANT NOTICE on page 85 of this issue.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

SIGHT RECORDS OF RARE BIRDS

In your Editorial comment on Backhurst (1971, *E.A.N.H.S. Bull.* March p.40) you ask for views on the acceptance of bird records for a national "List". I would like to discuss the situation in Zambia, as your counterpart here and as co-author (with Messrs Benson, Brooke & Irwin) of a book on the birds of Zambia to be published by Collins later this year.

The "Zambian List", as documented in our forthcoming book, gives definite status only to those species for which there are locally taken specimens. We make a slight exception for some of the common larger birds (e.g. storks, vultures) for which there may be no material, but which undoubtly occur and for which there is photographic evidence. Thus the basic "Zambian List" is purely factual.

However, we do not ignore species recorded only by sight. Those for which there are good sight records are documented in full in the systematic list, but are put in brackets. When material is forthcoming they can then readily be admitted to the "list", and anyone who disagrees with our criteria for acceptance can accept them forthwith. The number of such species is only half a dozen, none of them resident or common. Even experts have been known to misidentify birds in the field or in the hand. The best record, allowing confirmation of species and subspecies, will always be a fully documented museum specimen. Yet documented sight records will become more acceptable in Africa in the future.

It is not quite true, as you suggest, that it is an anomaly that once there is a local specimen then sight records can be accepted. All sight records of Zambian rarities - whether officially on the "List" or not - have to be fully documented, preferably with full field notes and photos. Any published sight records and indeed a few published specimen records, which have been found unacceptable, have been rejected in print.

There are, of course, sight records and sight records. The British Rarities Committee is a model of its kind, but Zambia has not needed such a body hitherto, although I suspect that East Africa may now need one. Nigeria was the first African country to have a qualified rarities committee, and South Africa has recently announced that its List Committee will in future judge all rarities The situation in South Africa has become confused with two rival and recent "Lists", which differ in their acceptance of records, and which are both too uncritical. Examination of the African literature suggests that it is only very recently that sight records have been documented to European standards.

To the present time there has been little amateur bird-watching in Zambia, though one hopes the situation will soon change. Insisting on documented specimens has not therefore been a drawback in the preparation of a Zambian list. In the "Birds of Zambia" we will have a firm, factual foundation on which to base future bird study in this country. In the future it might prove possible to accept species on to the "List" purely on good sight records. An up-to-date avifaunal work is much needed for East Africa, and I think you could do worse than follow tha Zambian example. Such a work would in itself stimulate further work by amateurs. "A Preliminary Check-list Of East African Birds" (Backhurst & Backhurst, 1970) is proving invaluable, but the documentation of bird records from East Africa (one of the best-worked parts of Africa) leaves much to be desired.

There is a small error in your Editorial comment. The "British Birds" Rarities Committee (the ten rare men) does not accept or reject records for the "British List". The "List" is maintained by the B.O.U. Records Committee (seven even rarer men) in close co-operation with the Rarities Committee, which itself judges all rarities and not just "firsts".

A local "List" as such has little scientific value, and often far too much importance is attached to whether or not a species is on the "List". Of more importance is an accurate account of the whole avifauna.

R. J. Dowsett,
National Museum,
Box 498,
Livingstone, Zambia.

Sir,

EAGLES AND THEIR PREY and OTHER TOPICS

I refer to correspondence from Mr Kim Taylor, Mr Bockett, Mr Gregory and Dr Leuthold. The behaviour of *Aquila rapax* races observed by Mr Taylor is quite normal. This species is highly piratical, robbing many other birds of prey from Lammergeiers and Martial Eagles to Kestrels and Black-shouldered Kites and also storks. This is not necessarily "ignoble" surely, particularly as it is very successful. Not all eagles behave in this way, even if they eat rats; Long-crested and Wahlberg's eagles for instance, which eat a lot of rats, are not piratical. Other piratical eagles include the Bateleur and the African Fish Eagle, while such other raptors as Black Kites, Caracaras and Lappet-faced Vultures are piratical too, robbing other raptors of their kills. The Bateleur is exceptionally violent, but usually not very successful. The piratical habit appears to be associated with scavenging; real hunters are sportsmen.

Crowned Eagles do kill antelope up to the size of a half-grown bushbuck weighing at least 18 kg. A short note will shortly appear in *Ibis* on this subject. Such large kills have to be dismembered and carried away bit by bit. Martial Eagles, larger and heavier than crowned Eagles, are not usually inclined to kill such heavy prey but are habitually game-bird killers. I have known them kill an Impala calf, but Dr Leuthold's record of a Lesser Kudu is probably the heaviest animal known to be killed by this species.

With regard to check lists, as the co-author of one I may be able to comment. When Dr Urban and I were preparing our Ethiopian list we felt it wise to include any sight records that seemed acceptable, since they could help to draw attention to the possibility of the occurrence of the species concerned. I am aware that this practice is frowned on by museum trained systematists, but I do not think any harm is done provided it is made clear that it is a sight record only, and the reference, where possible, is given so that people who are dubious may check for themselves.

Again, surely it depends on the bird ? I do not see how anyone could mistake a Shoebill or an adult Verreaux's Eagle, and I always thought that C.M.N. White was unduly precious when he said in one of his papers that he would not accept a record of Verreaux's Eagle for Zambia because it had not been shot. There was no further good record till I myself saw one at Kalambo Falls, with Vesey Fitzgerald, and I suppose he would have thrown that out too. Benson accepted the earlier record for his check list. *Aquila pomarina*, the subject of much correspondence lately, would be another matter in this country. Then, small warblers or weavers in off-season plumage, or immature sunbirds are another thing again. What one should do here is to record the possibility, saying it needs confirmation by a specimen if possible.

I have, incidentally, no doubt at all that Mr Frankum saw a Forbes' Banded Plover at Lake Nabugabo.

Leslie Brown,
Box 24916, Karen,
Kenya.

Sir,

I was surprised to note in the *Bulletin* of April 1971 the inclusion of a letter from the Director of "The Butterfly Centre" requesting specimens of African butterflies and moths.

Could you give members any more information on "The Butterfly Centre"? If this request is for the supply of specimens for commercial purposes then surely this is contrary to the Society's interest and support for conservation ?

Indiscriminate collecting has, in the past, played a substantial role in the decline of many species of Lepidoptera (e.g. the British form of the Large Copper butterfly) and while entomological dealers may assist in education by supplying live insects, they also tend to perpetuate the cult of killing and setting butterflies and moths. African insect life is already threatened by the destruction of habitat and (possibly) the extensive use of insecticides. It would be a shame if this trend were to be accelerated by over-zealous collecting for dealers in Europe.
I certainly feel that the Society should be wary of associating itself with such commercial interests until it has more knowledge of the motives involved.

John E. Cooper,
c/o Veterinary Research Laboratory,
P.O. Kabete.

Sir,

During the Christmas holidays the following incident took place on our farm at Ulu; 70 km SE of Nairobi.

A cat belonging to Mrs R.O'B Wilson was playing near the stables, when suddenly out of the sky swooped a big eagle, caught the cat in its talons and sailed away.

The observer thought he identified it as a Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis* but was not sure. Mackworth-Praed & Grant mention that these eagles have been known to attack cats.

INVASION BY EUROPEAN BEE-EATERS

On our farm at Ulu on 14th March 1971, at 9 am., a flock of about 50 European Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster* swirled over the house and garden where my son lives. They performed aerobatics and attacked a flight of bees which had been causing much trouble and inconvenience to the household for a considerable time. At 10 o'clock these most lovely visitors departed as suddenly and swiftly as they came.

Elizabeth Wilson,
(Lady Wilson)
Kilima Kiu,
P.O. Ulu, Kenya.

NOTE

The following two bird books are mentioned so often by contributors and must be known to most of our readers that I feel that their titles need not be quoted in full in future, the authors' names alone will suffice.

Jackson, F.J. (edited by W.L. Sclater) (1938) The Birds of Kenya Colony and the Uganda Protectorate. London, Gurney & Jackson. 3 vols.

Mackworth-Praed, C.W. & Grant, C.H.B. (1957 & 1960) African Handbook of Birds, Series 1, vols. 1 & 2 : Birds of Eastern and North Eastern Africa (2nd edition), London, Longmans, Green and Co.

EDITOR

IMPORTANT NOTICE

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE JUNE, JULY, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER *BULLETINS* SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO Mr. JOHN KARMALI, BOX 2202, NAIROBI. THIS IS BECAUSE I SHALL BE AWAY ON LEAVE.

EDITOR.

RINGING NEWS

Would all ringers please note that I shall be away from Kabete for 75 days from mid May until early August this year. Would anyone in need of rings please order them (including full payment for rings and postage) as soon as possible please; all cheques should be made out to the Society and NOT to me . Non East African cheques are acceptable provided that the necessary exchange adjustments have been made.

While I am on leave I plan to complete the bulk of the Ringing Report so could I please ask all ringers to send me their schedules as soon as possible, remember that the ringing year ends on 30th June when all schedules, complete or not, should be sent in; I have made arrangements for post to be forwarded.

Details have just been received from the Russian ringing office of the Swallow *Hirundo rustica* controlled by John Reynolds; unfortunately the Russian office did not report the age of the bird on ringing, but with luck this information will be supplied in due course. (See this *Bulletin*, April 1971 p.58)

Moskwa

K-0001B4	Age ?	24.4.70	*near* Chokpak, Dzhambul Region, Kazakh S.S.R. U.S.S.R. 42.31'N., 70.38'E.
	v	5.2.71	Kibebe Farm, Iringa, Tanzania. 7.46'S., 35.42'E. (re-ringed Nairobi J.50653).

RETRAPS: I would be grateful if all ringers would send me details of Palearctic birds they retrap; I realize that some people consider these data as their own property, but I would ask them to consider the situation if one of their retraps is recovered: the bird might have been ringed in October, retrapped in April and recovered in May i.e. the retrapping in April is thus highly important in the interpretation of the recovery. I would also remind ringers that submission of retraps is compulsory in the U.K.

Please give retraps in the following manner on a sheet of paper:

Ring No.	Species	Gap	Retrap Date	Weight

I will fill in the ringing date in red ink in the gap, make out a card for each retrap and return the sheet to the ringer.

Graeme Backhurst,
Ringing Organiser,
P.O. Kabete.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Saturday, 8th May: Study of a field in Nairobi (for beginners), lead by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Meet at the National Museum at 3.30 p.m.

Monday, 10th May: Dr. P.S. Bramley of the Department of Animal Physiology, Nairobi University, will give a talk on "The Natural History of the Roe Deer" of which he has made a special study.

Sunday, 23rd May: Professor N. J. Skinner will lead a field trip to Ol Donya Sabuk. Meet at the Museum at 9 a.m. or at the end of the tarmac on the Garissa Road, about 6 miles beyond Thika, at 10.30 a.m. Bring picnic lunch.

Members are reminded that there is a bird study walk every Wedensday led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno leaving the Museum at 9 a.m. for visitors and those not in regular work.

Weekend at Baringo Lodge: The party for the weekend of 19th-21st June is now full, but a few people need lifts. A special notice is being enclosed for members of that party. A second weekend is now being planned for the next weekend, the nights of 26th & 27th June, and this is also nearly full. If there are enough people interested, of course, a third can be planned, but please keep to the one for which your name is down.

Please fill in the enclosed form if you would like to join the second party or a later one, and return it to the Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi as soon as possible.

N.B. Children under 12 can share their parents' room and are charged for at 35/- a day each. Those over 12 are treated as adults.

The Ark is also offering reduced prices - sh.100/- a night for a party of 30 or over, and Ngulia Safari Lodge offers a 20% discount for a party of 10. Some of us might like to take advantage of these offers.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Benson, C.W. 1970, The Cambridge collection from the Malagasy region. *Bull.Br. Orn. Cl.* 90:168.

Britton, P.L. 1970, Some non-passerine bird weights from East Africa. *Bull. Br. Orn. Cl.* 90:152.

Clancey, P.A. 1970, On *Smithornis capensis suahelicus* Grote, 1926. *Bull.Br. Orn. Cl.* 90:164.

Cooper, J. & Marshall, B.E. 1970, Observations on the nestlings of the Goliath Heron, *Ardea goliath*, in Rhodesia. Bull.Br. *Bull. Br. Orn.Cl.* 90:148.

Forbes -Watson, A.D. 1970. A new species of *Malaenornis* (Muscicapinae) for Liberia. *Bull. Br. Orn. Cl.* 90:148.

Lakhanpal, R.N. & Prakash, U. 1970. Cenozoic plants from Congo. 1. Fossil woods from the Miocene of Lake Albert *Ann.Mus.Roy.Afr.Cent.* No.64.

Urban, E.K., Brown, L.H., Buer, C.E. & Plage, G.D. 1970. Four descriptions of nesting, previously undescribed, from Ethiopia. *Bull.Br.Orn.Cl.* 90:162.

LIBRARY NOTES

NEW BOOKS - Gifts:

Benson, C.W. & White, C.M.N. Check list of the birds of Northern Rhodesia. Lusaka, Government Printer. (1957)

Brown, L.H. Eagles. London, Micheal Joseph. (1955)

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Urban, E.K. & Brown, L.H. A checklist of the birds of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, Haile Sellassie 1 University Press, (1971)

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THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes a leading and highly respected scientific journal —*The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum*. From the beginning of 1971 each issue will consist usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page will be issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Kabete, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Hon. Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi.

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Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN JUNE, 1971

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WHISKERED TERNS BREEDING IN TANZANIA

On 3rd and 4th August, 1968 I visited an mbuga (seasonal swamp) near Chipogolo, about half way between Iringa and Dodoma. The mbuga was covered to a depth of about 122 centimetres by flood water in which aquatic plants, especially species belonging to the Potamotgetonaceae were growing densely.

About 20 Whiskered Terns Sterna hybrida, most of which were just starting to moult from breeding plumage, were observed feeding in the later afternoon of 3rd August. On the following morning I saw an unidentified bird of prey being mobbed by about 6 terns as it flew across the mbuga. A little later I saw at least 2 different terns repeatedly carrying food and dropping down into different parts of the swamp. I was able to get glimpses of a young tern clamouring for food and being fed in the nearer area but there was too much vegetation around the young bird for me to be able to estimate its age. Later in the morning I saw a fledged juvenile being fed. As far as I could tell 3 pairs of terns were attending large young, at least one of which had reached the flying stage.

I was unable to check the mbuga in 1969 but insufficient rain fell in the 1969/70 and 1970/71 rainy seasons to create a suitable breeding habitat in 1970 and 1971. There are two previous breeding records for Tanzania. Thomas (1960) saw a juvenile being fed at Nzinge Dam, Dodoma District, on 2nd June, 1958 while Fuggles-Couchman (1962) found about 30 pairs breeding at Eluanata Dam, 48 kilometres west of Arusha in December 1961 and January, 1962.

J.F. Reynolds,
Mkwawa Secondary School,
IRINGA, Tanzania.

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ASSEMBLING EAST AFRICAN EMPEROR MOTHS

I was most interested to read in the January, 1971 Bulletin of the unsuccessful attempts by J.E. Cooper of "assembling" the Saturniid Nudaurelia krucki at Kabete. Whereas there are numerous reports of successful "assembling" of European, Asian or North American Saturniids, there are few accounts of success using tropical species.

One might expect all Saturniids to "assemble" readily, because the brief life-span of the non-feeding adult should necessitate efficient location of the opposite sex. However, in the Ethiopian Region the only genus for which there seems much success is Gynanisa, a group of large bark-patterned moths with hindwing eyespots set in rings of beige and pinkish mauve. M. Gaede in Seitz (1930) records that G. maia "assembles" readily in South Africa, where the species is sometimes a pest of Peach trees. A recent revision of the genus by Pinhey (1968) leaves some doubt as to which species occur in East Africa, but G. maia s.str is possibly restricted to Southern Africa. In Gabon, Rougeot (1955) has reported unsuccessful attempts to "assemble" Bunaea, Nudaurelia and Epiphora, but gives a footnote that at Libreville a female B. alcinoe succeeded in attracting some 30 males. I have attempted the same thing with more than a dozen freshly-emerged female B. alcinoe at Entebbe, with total lack of success. Only once have I suspected any effect, when 4 males showed apparent interest in a female which appeared at light, but no mating was observed. With Lobobunaea phaedusa I have had equally negative results despite wild males coming to light near freshly-emerged females. On the other hand, Rougeot (1962) states that freshly-emerged females of this species at Libreville attracted numerous males, mostly between 1.00 and 5.00 a.m.

Perhaps the answer lies in the work of Riddiford and Williams (1967), who reported that "Polyphemus moths Antherea polyphemus will not mate in the laboratory unless a volatile substance found in red-Oak leaves is present. When the female receives the emanation via her antennae, she releases a sex pheromone, which attracts the male." This volatile oak-factor was subsequently identified as trans-2-hexanal (Riddiford, 1967), which was most effective in inducing the female to "call" (i.e., to expose her scent gland under the experimental conditions at concentrations of 0.05 to 0.005% aqueous solution in a film-paper wick. Further studies seem to be called for, as Riddiford goes on to say, "Although trans-2-hexanal is ubiquitous in green leaves, leaves of other food plants of polyphemus do not provoke mating. Either Oak leaves release more trans-2-hexanal than other food plants tested, or those other types of leaves also release masking odours. As judged by gas chromatography, vacuum distillates of Oak, Maple, Birch, Beech and Elm leaves contain roughly equivalent amounts of trans-2-hexanal .... (but) .... all other leaves except Elm block the action of both Oak leaves and 0.05% trans-2-hexanal."

Having read this, I placed a freshly-emerged female L.phaedusa on a cut branch of a favoured food plant, Sapium ellipticum, within a screen door. As a check on the presence of males, a mercury-vapour light was kept on outside about 10 feet away out of the line of sight of the female. She refused to remain on the branch and climbed to a point a few inches above, but by 1.00 a.m. was seen to begin to "call". In all, 7 males and one female came to the light, one of the males showing apparent temporary interest in the female for a few minutes before being diverted to the light. One male appeared on a darkened screen porch at the other side of the house and was brought inside. After flying around the room for a short time he settled near the calling female but then became quiescent and made no attempt to mate. Several males brought indoors from the light showed no interest in the female. The results were therefore inconclusive; the unusually high number of L.phaedusa on one night might well have been the result of simultaneous emergence in the area, especially as a female was among them, and as the captive female had emerged from a pupa collected locally only 28 days before.

L.phaedusa larvae will feed on such a wide variety of plants that the foliage of Sapium might or might not induce "calling" by this species in nature. N. krucki larvae are so commonly found on the weeping Pepper tree in the Nairobi area that it is more likely to function in this way. Riddiford's work suggests that preferences of this kind may operate through specific indifference to volatile inhibitors in the presence of non-specific inducers, in the same way that larval food plant preferences are known in many cases to be determined.

Perhaps a further method to induce "assembling" could be attempted. As pointed out by Riddiford and Williams (1967), females of A. polyphemus from which the antennae had recently been amputated would "call" and mate without chemical stimulation.

It would be particularly interesting to conduct such experiments in East Africa, for the Saturniidae of the Ethiopian Region all belong to genera endemic to the region. and appear to have speciated since the late Cretaceous or Miocene. Many features of morphology (e.g. eyespot details), behaviour (e.g. subterranean pupation without a cocoon) and physiology (e.g. lack of temperature-controlled pupal diapause) place the spectacular genera Bunaea, Imbrasia, Nudaurelia, Lobobunaea, Parabunaea and Pseudimbrasia apart from other Emperor moths. In view of the difficulties of maintaining stocks in captivity, the more that can be done with wild-caught material the better. It may well be that many of the African species share unique features of "assembling", in contrast to the better-studied American species. Keep trying!

A.W.R. McCrae,
E.A. Virus Research Institute, Entebbe ,
now at: Hope Dept. of Entomology,
Oxford, England.

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A NOTE ON LESSER MOORHEN GALLINULA ANGULATA IN TANZANIA

A marshy area some 8 kilometres north of Dar es Salaam is inhabited by at least 2 pairs of Lesser Moorhen. This marshy area drains into a pond with a surface area of some 150 square metres. At least half of this is covered with water lilies. Thd pond is fringed by reeds and sedges mostly no more than a metre high, although there are two small patches of taller reedmace. Beyond the marsh itself the land is mainly under rice. The area is adjacent to several large houses which front a main road. The sound of human activity is always present and a well used foot-path passes through part of the rice paddy within a metre of the marsh.

I first became aware of the presence of the Lesser Moorhens in March, 1971 when I heard their subdued chuckling calls in the reeds. I did not see them until late April and it was early May before I obtained good views of them.

The only descriptions of Gallinula angulata that I have seen are in Mackworth-Praed and Grant, Williams and Roberts (see end). Although not particularly comprehensive, these descriptions do not fit the Dar es Salaam birds on 2 points. Firstly, the 3 individuals I have seen have pink legs and feet, not green or greenish-yellow. The legs are slightly darker pink above the tarsal joint but do not have the red garter of the Moorhen Gallinula chloropus. Secondly, they all have white feathers on the flanks giving the effect of a side stripe similar to, but shorter than, that of Gallinula chloropus.

In general colour they are bluish slate on the head, neck and underparts, brighter and paler than in G. chloropus but darker sooty black on the under tail coverts and round the base of the bill. The undertail coverts are bordered with white feathers as in G.chloropus. The upperparts are brownish black, darker on the flight feathers. The bill is yellow with a red frontal shield and culmen. This and the pink legs and feet make G. angulata readily distinguishable from G. chloropus in the field. The iris appears to be red or reddish brown. In size they are noticeably smaller than nearby Jacanas Actophilornis africanus, and appear smaller than G. chloropus, although there are none of the latter present for direct comparison.

The head, in particular, looks small and the large red frontal shield gives the bill an almost triangular aspect.

They are shy birds, preferring to lurk in the cover of sedges and rice but venturing on to the lilies when there is no sign of disturbance. They swim less readily than G. chloropus, are perhaps more inclined to fly but their movements, particularly the tail jerking, are typical of the genus. The call is like that of G. chloropus but a more subdued, conversational, chuckling note.

W.G. Harvey,
P.O. Box 9100 ,
DAR ES SALAAM.

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UNUSUAL NEST OF FLAPPET LARK

On 27th December, 1970 I found the nest of a Flappet Lark Mirafra rufocinnamomea containing 2 young birds about 8 days old sited in a grass tussock in secondary bush in the grounds of Mkwawa Secondary School, Iringa. The sides and back of the nest were loosely extended upwards to form a dome, 7 - 8 centimetres high, covering approximately half of the nest cup. The general effect was very similar to the canopy that a Redshank Tringa totanus forms from the grass in which it makes its nest but careful inspection of the nest showed that the dome was definitely part of the nest fabric and had not been formed from the surrounding tussock. Domed nests do not appear to have been previously recorded in this species and must be very unusual in any member of the Alaudidae.

J.F. Reynolds,
Mkwawa Secondary School ,
IRINGA ,
Tanzania.

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IS PLOCEUS NIGRICOLLIS MELANOXANTHUS (Cabanis) MONOGAMOUS OR POLYGAMOUS

Polygamy is well known in certain of the Ploceidae such as in Euplectes spp. and according to Moreau (1960) some Ploceus spp. However, he states (page 315) that there is good reason to think monogamous species to include nigricollis and quotes N.F. Fuggles-Couchman who mentions "Melanoxanthus where they nest (solitary) in Acacias."

During the course of a survey of parasitic species in 1970, 3 colonies" of P. nigricollis were located in the Olekemonge area of the Nairobi - Magadi road, Kenya, a dry acacia grassland environment at an altitude of around 1,000 metres. At mile 38, on 12th April, 1970 a newly completed nest was found without eggs and a second nest had been commenced, with a male bird very busy. The following weekend, the first nest contained eggs while the second nest appeared completed but unoccupied. Two females and only one male bird were in attendance. By the third weekend the second nest contained eggs and again there were two females and but a single male.

At mile 44, two nests of nigricollis were found, one with a very long entrance funnel; both were empty. The following weekend, a third nest was under construction, again by a male, and two females were present. On 13th May, 1970 two nests contained eggs and the third nest appeared completed. The nests were under fairly regular inspection on each occasion as the car was parked in the shade of the nest tree - an Acacia, and only one male was seen. These nests were very low down and easily reached for inspection but those at the first colony were high up. However, the nests being finely woven of fibres and without lining, the eggs could be seen through them.

Unfortunately, all these nests were destroyed on 31st May, by staff of the Quelea Control Officer of the Agricultural Department.

At a third site, four nests were found, all close together. Though these were somewhat old, they did suggest that here was a possible case of a cock bird with three hens.

These observations show that P. nigrocollis may be at times, bigamous or polygamous and not monogamous - at least in the Olekemonge area. This species, therefore, on evidence available, is similar to Malimbus rubriceps leuconotus (Muller) quoted by Moreau (op. cit) where various observers record conflicting results suggesting polygamy in South Africa, monogamy in East Africa and either in Rhodesia. This question of status is of some interest and any records would be welcomed by the writer. Moreau (op. cit) is inclined to link polygamous and monogamous species with their breeding dress and as nigricollis has no seasonal change is plumage, it should be monogamous!

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947,
KAREN.

REFERENCE

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SOMALI BEE-EATER IN TSAVO NATIONAL PARK

Referring to the note by H. and P. Britton in the May Bulletin on observing a Somali Bee-eater Merops revoilii in Tsavo East National Park, I would like to add the following:

While the available literature seems to indicate that Tsavo is well outside the range of the Somali Bee-eater, the species has been observed in this park repeatedly. I have personally seen it at least seven times, between 23rd May, 1968 and 4th April, 1971. Mr. C. Smeenk has also seen it recently and it has been recorded in the preliminary check list for birds of Tsavo East, compiled by Mr. A.D. Forbes-Watson in 1967. My own observations suggest that the occurrence of this species here may be seasonal only, the dates being spread between 18th October and 23rd May, but further observations are required to clarify this point. Also, I have only seen the species in the immediate vicinity of the Galana River or one of its tributaries - never farther to the south.

Walter Leuthold,
Tsavo Research Project,
P.O. Box 14,
VOI.

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A NESTING RECORD OF THE CRESTED LARK IN KENYA

Mrs. Hazel Britton, the organiser of the Society's Nest Record Scheme, has informed me that a card I recently submitted may represent the first breeding record for Kenya of the Crested Lark Galerida cristata somaliensis. The only breeding reference given in Mackworth-Praed & Grant for this race is for the former British Somaliland in January.

A nest of the crested lark was found at Loiengalani (2°45'N, 36°43'E), about one mile from the south-east shore of Lake Rudolf, on 28th March, 1970. The nest was built in a roughly circular hollow, about 10 centimetres deep, on bare, sandy ground adjacent to the landing strip. A considerable amount of dried grass had been loosely woven to line the nest to just above ground level, the outside diameter being about 13 centimetres. The structure of the nest was firm enough to resist the very strong winds which blow across this plain at night.

The nest contained three eggs. These were rather pointed ovate, whitish-pink in ground colour with chocolate-brown specks and blotches. Their dimensions were 24.8 x 16.3, 23.2 x 17.3 and 23.5 x 17.3 millimetres. The eggs were incubated almost continuously by one of the parent birds. The nest was situated within an area used for camping by a field party of the Geological Club of Nairobi, the nearest tents being some 10 metres from the nest. In order to avoid accidental trampling of the nest, a circle of large stones was placed around it, and the parent bird soon resumed incubation. It was extremely tame and would only leave the nest on the approach of a person to within a few yards.

At the time of this visit to Loiengalani there had been no rain for several months and conditions were extremely hot and dry.

The nest and eggs were photographed and colour slides are in the possession of the writer.

N.J. Skinner,
P.O. Box 30197,
NAIROBI .

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SIGHTING OF A PIAPIAC IN KENYA

On the Veterinary Farm at Maseno, Nyanza, on 16th April, 1971 I noticed an unusual bird. This was later identified as a Piapiac Ptilostomus afer and it would seem from the limited literature at my disposal that this may be the first time one has been seen in Kenya.

The bird was feeding on insects disturbed by some grazing **horses**, much in the manner of a Cattle Egret. It kept very close to the muzzle or feet of the animals as they grazed and would occasionally snap at flies settling on their legs. The character of the birds, especially the way in which it made short runs, was very reminiscent of a Starling. Indeed, when I first noticed the bird I thought it must be a large member of that family.

The bird was generally matt black but the long tail and the primary flight feathers were "murram" brown. The iris was red. I was fortunate to be able to get within 40 feet of the bird and photograph it (400 mm lens).

I later contacted Mr. & Mrs. J. Harper of Maseno who came and watched and also photographed the bird.

This all occurred between 12.30 and 5.30 p.m. on 16th April, 1971, a few days after the start of the rains. I have not seen the bird subsequently.

V.R. Simpson,
P.O. Box 25,
Maseno.

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FEEDING HABITS

The following note is prompted by recent accounts of the feeding habits of Eagles.

At 7.00 a.m. on 15th March, 1971 I saw a Great Sparrow Hawk Accipiter melanoleuous flying towards some Jacaranda trees and carrying a very large rodent. Without uttering any call, one of a pair of African Kites Milvus migrans tenebrosus, with a nearby nest, swooped head-on at the approaching Sparrow Hawk.

The Kite "rolled" and passed beneath the Sparrow Hawk and at the same time robbed it. The Sparrow Hawk crashed headlong into the tree and sat, panting and looking very bewildered. Whilst this behaviour seems to be common between Kites, this was the first time I had seen one rob another species.

V.R. Simpson,
P.O. Box 25,
Maseno.

KNOB-BILLED GOOSE BREEDING IN TANZANIA

As Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1957) state that the Knob-billed Goose Sarkidionis melanota has not been recorded breeding north of Nyasaland (Malawi) it seems worth recording that on 2nd April, 1971 I saw a female accompanied by 30 goslings, about the size of White-backed Ducks Thalassornis leuconotus, at an mbuga near Chipogolo, about half way between Iringa and Dodoma. The large number of goslings with one goose suggests that some sort of creche system similar to that of the Shelduch Tadorna tadorna, may operate in this species.

J.F. Reynolds,
Mkwawa Secondary School,
IRINGA,
Tanzania.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Will all contributors please continue to send their material to John Karmali at P.O. Box 2202, Nairobi, until further notice.

Acting Editor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I am of the opinion that after reading Mr. A. Deane's article "Along the water's edge", part 1., you were in such a state of apoplexy, or hysteria, or both, that you were not in a fit state to write a review!* The technical severity of your comments would have been acceptable had Mr. Deane's article been prepared for a scientific journal, but in "Africana" I am certain it was intended as a bit of light-hearted reading for the layman, anthropomorphic statements and all. If you really object so much to anthropomorphism you had better get out your red pen and start on "Praed & Grant", "Jackson" and a few others besides, for it can be found in any text, especially as regards bird call-notes.

Further, in your temporarily demented state you misquoted the author in a manner that would do credit to a reported for the "Daily Blotch". I quote you; "In his 4th paragraph Mr. Deane claims that Little Stints fly from 'the Equator to far beyond the Arctic Circle in Siberian Tundra in 10 weeks' ". What he actually said was, "... in 10 weeks they have flown from the Equator to far beyond the Arctic Circle in Siberian Tundra, courted, mated, reared and now they are back." i.e. total time elapsed of 10 weeks. Praed & Grant have much the same to say, viz., "Returns to Africa early and is common from mid August to mid May". Of course Praed & Grant's statements are not based on ringing studies either!

As to your comments on 'impossible'and 'fabulous' I would refer you to your own misuse of 'awful' (March Bulletin p. 42) and add quietly, 'pathetic'!

V. Simpson,
P.O. Box 25,
Maseno.

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* Review by GCB in the May issue of the Bulletin - Ag.Ed.

John Karmali has allowed me to read Mr. Simpson's letter printed above. Mr. Simpson's views on the article in question are diametrically opposed to mine and I accept that my opinions may not be shared by everbody else.

Graeme Backhurst,
P.O. Kabete.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

It is rather disappointing that there is generally so little response from the majority of members to the "requests for information".

The response to "rare birds" and "House Martins" has been good; but for everything else it has been poor. Peter Britton is still without any information on the Black Cuckoo Shrike and I must add that I could do with a lot more on the members own project of "fruits, flowers, berries and birds."

J.S. Karmali.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

CUKOOS

According to the literature, the Great Spotted and Black & White Cuckoos Clamator glandarius and C. jacobinus are migrants to East Africa from the Palearctic Region although there are also Ethiopian populations of the two species which are also migratory. We would welcome members' records for these birds for use in our studies on migration which we plan to publish in due course.

If any members would be willing to supply records of other Cuckoo species as well we should be most grateful since it seems likely that all are migratory. Please reply to the first named below.

Peter L. Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
P.O. YALA.

Graeme Backhurst,
P.O. Kabete.

Clive Mann,
P.O. Box 337,
KAPSABET.

WILDFOWL COUNTS

I have been conducting wildfowl counts at a dam near Lusaka in Zambia for nearly a year. Some interesting trends are appearing, perhaps indicating finer details of habitat preferences during the non-breeding season.

I would appreciate any available information in the way of wildfowl counts from East Africa.

Details are needed for species and numbers; monthly maxima will suffice if visits have been frequent - otherwise as much detail as possible. Also important are habitate -type (at all seasons please) and the local rainy seasons.

Besides ducks and geese I would also like records of Little Grebe Podiceps ruficollis and Red-knobbed Coot Fulica cristata.

If the records are ever used in print full acknowledgements will be given.

John J. Tucker,
P.O. Box 8096,
LUSAKA,
Zambia.

CORRECTION

The Secretary would like to point out that the address of Mr. A. Mendes, who wrote asking for information on the Agama Lizards is P.O. Box 127, Kisumu and not Box 124 as printed in the Bulletin.

MWASUNGIA SCENERY GUEST HOUSE

It has been brought to our notice that the Mwasungia Scenery Guest House has been opened in the Taita Hills near Wundanyi. This is a self-service guest house and is fully furnished. For full details please write to Mr. Harrison Aggrey Mwachala, United Touring Co. Ltd., P.O. Box 2196, Nairobi.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Saturday 5th June: A field in Nairobi. Please meet Mrs. Ng'weno at 3.30 p.m. at the National Museum. Students and children welcome; lifts available.

Monday, 14th June: Dr. J.E. Cooper of the Vet. Research Lab., Kabete will give an illustrated talk on Veterinary Work at the Nairobi Snake Park, Ford Foundation Hall, National Museum at 5.15 p.m.

Saturday to Monday, 19th to 21st June: Lake Baringo Lodge for those who have signed up for this. The weekend of 26th to 28th is now full and those who have signed up for this are asked not to change their minds!

Saturday, 26th June: There will be a bird walk led by Miss Allen and Miss Angwin. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m. Bring a picnic tea and if possible, plan to stay until dark.

Monday, 19th July: Mr. Stewart Keith of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, has very kindly agreed to give us a lecture on "Recording Forest Birds" at which he will play some of his tapes. (Date to be confirmed).

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BULLETIN

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Editor: P. O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN JULY, 1971

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QUID EST IN NOMINE ? ENGLISH FOR MUSOPHAGIDAE

Newton (1896 p. 730) gives some information on the early names applied: he writes, "Plantain-eater, Latham's translation (Supp.II Gen.Synop., p.104) in 1802 of Isert's generic name *Musophaga* (Musa being the botanical name of the genus which contains Plaintans and Bananas) " and on page 979, "Touraco, the name evidently already in use, under which, in 1743 Edwards figured a pretty African bird". Cuvier, in 1799 or 1800 latinised its native name (adopted in the meanwhile by both French and German writers) but in 1788 Isert had described and figured a bird also from Guinea, which he called *Musophaga violacea*. "Bananenfresser" in *Beobacht.Gesellsch.natur. Freunde*.iii, pp 16-20, pl I."

On page 98i, Newton writes "to mention that found in the Cape Colony and Natal, where it is known as Lory. The genus contains four species, one of which is the *S. concolor* is a Grey Touraco of the colonists of Natal". Lory, a word of Malayan origin signifying Parrot, page 519, Newton (*op.cit*).

On page 979, in another footnote "Apparently the first ornithologist to make the bird known was Albin who figured it in 1738 from the life, yet badly, as the Crown-bird of Mexico" .... but Touracos were called Crown-birds by the Europeans in West Africa, as witness Bossman's "Description of the Coast of Guinea", 1721 and W. Smith's"Voyage to Guinea", 1745.

In Lydekker (1895, p. 13) there is a reference by R. Bowdler Sharp. "The Plantain-eater Family Musophagidae" which commences, "The Plantain-eaters or Touracos of Africa .... the birds are often called Louris is South Africa". On page 519 a footnote reads "The Lory of the colonists in South Africa is a Touracoo".

In Layard (1875-1884) can be found some interesting observations and names. He used Plantain-eater and quotes correspondents who refer to Lories and Louri. Quoting Captain Shelley's paper "its loud rough notes, somewhat resembling the word "Tourakoo".

Layard also quotes Sclater in No. I of the second volume of the "Student and Interlectual Observer "on Touracoes and their distribution, there occurs the following passage, "some of the birds ;... the false Turacoes .... Monterre, speaking of the False Grey Turacos".

"Lourie" is used by Priest(1929) for the species in Southern Rhodesia but he quotes the following names; Plantain-eater, Goaway Bird, Touracos, Tourakoa, King of the Forest" and the Mahshona native name "Gorawe".

Reichenow (1902-1903) in Die Vögel Afrikas Vol.II refers to the Musophagidae as "Pisang-fresser" which is most interesting as "pisang" is the Malay word for a banana or plantain!

Bannerman (1951) writes, "The genus *Turacus* Cuvier (1800) must be replaced by *Tauraco*. Kluck. Hist. Nat. ii, 1779, p.25, which is an older name and therefore has priority over Turacus. He ignores the priority and writes,"I propose to use the generic name which I originally employed". (It is to be noted that no anglicised version of the spelling employs the 'a' as in *Tauraco*).

Roberts (1938) adds, "Loeries" as the generic English name for his birds.

Sclater (1924-1930) has divided his birds into four groups as Touraco, Lourie, Plantain-eater and Go-away Birds. Yet why his *Turacus persa* (Linnaeus) should be a "Touraco" but all others are "Louries", including *Proturacus*, *Gallirex* and *Ruwenzorornis*, is difficult to understand. Bates (1930) similarly, makes an exception in his list, for *T.persa* is a "Touraco" but the others, "Louries". On page 183, he writes, "the name Lourie is of South African origin and I follow the custom of giving this as the English name for all species of *Turacus* except *persa*, though they might well all be called Touracos". Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1952) make an exception to their Turacos with *Crinifer zonurus* (Ruppell) which becomes a Plantain-eater!

The original "Touracos", an African name, was considered by Newton (op.cit) to be a barbarous one while Moreau (1938 and 1957) claims that the English name, Plantain-eater was unjustified and misleading and as an alternative suggests that the name Turacus is available for the family as a whole, though in the past there has been a tendency to confine it to Tauraco spp.

Not to accept Plantain-eater is analagous to saying we are unable to accept Kingfisher for the family Alcedinidae, suggesting that this is also inappropriate since the majority of the species neither catch nor feed on fish. If we are to accept Moreau, then it is necessary to have an accepted spelling of the word, thus was Moreau correct in suggesting Turacus when the latin is Tauraco?

For the grey group of bush, scrub birds, as opposed to the more forest frequenting species or genera, can Plantain-eater be accepted? Some writers use the name,others have favoured Go-away bird -"Gorawe"!

Leslie Brown (this Bull. March 1971) complains about priorities; however, if we accept priorities then "Crown-birds" must be the name for the Musophagidae - 1721 - the earliest recorded English name.

Finally, it is to be noted that White (1965) uses Tauracus of Kluck, 1779 and is rightly followed in the check list by the Backhursts; however, they revert to Turacos and Go-away birds for English names. A pity, I think: they should really be the "eaters of Plantains", the Muso-phagids.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947,
Karen.

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FIRST REPORT OF THE EANHS NEST RECORD SCHEME
NOVEMBER 1969 - DECEMBER 1970

When starting this scheme in late 1969, it was understood that it would probably not be the tremendous success that it might have been if started in the 1950s, so that the modest success to date is rather encouraging. This report is several months late due to some members' delay in sending completed cards. Many who took cards in 1969 and early 1970 have still not responded to my appeal in the April 1971 Bulletin. A total of 491 cards have been received for the period under review as well as 1294 from previous years. The Belcher and National Museum egg collections in Nairobi produced a further 1032 cards so that a total of 2817 cards have been completed, dealing with over 500 species. On many cards for previous years there is more than one record, so that the actual number of breeding records would be nearer 3000. Enthusiasm for the scheme is certainly growing so that I hope for a number in excess of 500 completed cards for each year in the future.

There are already too many interesting records to enumerate here - especially first breeding records for either Kenya, Tanzania or Uganda, or in some cases East Africa - and these will be published eventually. A few contributors have published short notes on interesting breeding records in the Bulletin and I hope this practice will continue. There are several records from the Belcher and Museum collections and anonymous data collected by the EANHS some years ago, which I will publish as soon as possible. However, to assess such records adequately, it is necessary to consult the diverse literature very thoroughly and this will take until the end of this year or possibly longer. Reference cards have been filed along with the Nest Record cards so that all enthusiasts may benefit.

Many members of the EANHS appear not to appreciate the value of contributing to a scheme such as this and the lack of cards for certain exceedingly common species is remarkable. Notably the lack of game birds and other nidifugous species which any visitor to a Game Reserve or National Park cannot fail to record 'breeding' by seeing small young. This is a breeding record and a card for the Nest Record Scheme need not necessarily involve a nest! The name is widely used for such 'breeding data' schemes elsewhere and hence it has been adopted here. But the lack of data in Africa makes even the simplest observation interesting.

It has been reported to me that some of the people who have failed to submit their cards have said "it's only a Hadada; they can't want that", or something similar. What nonsense! The most valuable data in the scheme are those numerically strongest like Dark-capped Bulbul Pycnonotus barbatus (56), Fiscal Lanius collaris (36), Kittlitz's Sand Plover Charadrius pecuarius (35) Richard's Pipit Anthus novaeseelandiae (33), Tawny-flanked Prinia Prinia subflava (31), and Crowned Lapwing Vanellus coronatus (30). There are surprising gaps also-for example, only one card for Pied Crow Corvus albus - so that it is not possible for anybody to know what is or is not 'interesting'. Already several workers - some from outside East Africa - have requested data from the scheme. In some cases I have been almost ashamed at how few records I could supply, and would once again like to encourage all thos interested in birds to complete these cards. In a society as large as ours there is no reason why our annual number of cards should not exceed 100.

Hazel Britton,
P.O. Box 1102,
KISUMU.

CORRECTION

Mr. W.G. Harvey writes to say that there was a small error in his note on Lesser Moorhen, which appeared in the June issue of the Bulletin.

He described the legs and feet as pink when, in fact, he meant the feet and toes - plus that part of the leg which is unfeathered above the tarsal joint.

ASSEMBLING EMPEROR MOTHS

I was interested to read the note on assembling by A.W.R. McCrae in the Bulletin (June 1971 p.91) and of his lack of success. In one place he writes, "Only once have I suspected any effect, when four males showed apparent interest in a female which appeared at light, but no mating was observed." He also points out that he had no result "despite wild males coming to the light near freshly emerged females" of Lobobunaea phaedusa. This I am not surprised at.

The moths coming into light are 'dazzled'. Mr. H.S. Robinson, who designed the moth-traps used in Europe has this to say on the subject: "If one comes within view of a bright light against a background of total darkness, there is a tendency to turn towards it. This tendency is readily observed when driving a car towards a bright light, e.g. the headlights of another car. There is an involuntary tendency, against which considerable reason must be used, to swerve into the light." He is quoting a case from human experience here but I think the same holds true of the moth, which has not got the reasoning powers of humans!

In another place in the same article he states, "Our observations of similar traps led us to assume quite uncritically, that night-flying insects were attracted to lights, the attraction being in the nature of that exerted by a female moth in assembling the males." If this is the case, and I have noted this as well, then mostly male moths should arrive at the trap, which is the case. The males are therefore already responding to a type of sexual stimulus and being dazzled as well complicates matters for them.

To see the effects of assembling the moths, the following should be tried. A captive virgin female should be left near some males of the same species in complete darkness to see whether this is the right conditions. Also, McCrae's notes on volatile substances may have to be within a very short distance of the female before reacting, and so all the adults from one tree or bush may pair there before the female sets out to lay eggs on other plants.

One other point: It has recently been found that some species of Saturniidae are pathenogenic, i.e. the female can lay fertile eggs without pairing. I know that this is not the case with Nudaurelia krucki, but could it be the case with some of the other species?

M.P. Clifton,
Entomologist,
National Museum,
P.O. Box 658,
NAIROBI.

REFERENCE

Robinson, H.S. (1952) On the Behaviour of Night-Flying Insects in the Neighbourhood of a Bright Source of Light, Proc.R. ent. Soc. Lond., Series A, Vol. 27 p.13

RINGING NEWS

I would like to remind all ringers that the ringing year ends on 30th June. All schedules, whether full or incomplete, should be sent to me as soon after this date as possible, c/o the Society, P.O. Box 4486, Nairobi. Please remember to send me details of retraps of Palearctic birds as well.

There are three long distance recoveries to report this month:

J.19219 Sylvia atricapilla Blackcap

o 20.11.1968 Lake Uranga, Central Nyanza,
Kenya 0.05'N., 34.16'E
(P.L. Britton)
X 11.04.1971 near Bidkarz, Fars Province,
Iran 29.55'N., 51.00'E.

J.37100 Hirundo rustica Swallow

o 20.01.1970 Athi River, Kenya c 1.28'S.,
36.59'E. (G.C.B.)
"caught"
30.04.1971 Chokpak Pass, Kazakhstan, U.S.S.R.
42.31'N., 70.38'E.

J.49030 Phoenicurus phoenicurus Redstart

o 6.03.1971 Kachonga, Mbale, Uganda
c. 1°N., 33.10'E. (J. Rolfe)
v 22.03.1971 ------ ditto ------
+ 22.04.1971 Al-Haditha, Iraq, 34.09'N.,
42.22'E

Graeme Backhurst,
Ringing Organiser,
c/o EANHS,
P.O. Box 4486,
NAIROBI .

YELLOW-CROWNED BISHOPS IN CENTRAL TANZANIA

Mackworth-Praed & Grant record the Yellow-Crowned Bishop Euplectes afer as occurring in "eastern Tanganyika Territory as far south as 150 miles south of Mt. Kilimanjaro" and also at "Mitimone, Rovuma River, southern Tanganyika Territory." Williams (1967) summarizes the Tanzanian distribution as "eastern, northern and extreme southern Tanzania."

On 2nd April, 1971 I observed several males of this species in display flight at two localities between Iringa and Dodoma: the first was at an mbuga about halfway between Iringa and Dodoma near Chipogolo and the second was at Matumbulu Dam, 24 kilometres from Dodoma.

These records extend the documented distribution of E.afer to central Tanzania and suggest that the bird may be widely but locally distributed over much of Tanzania.

J.F. Reynolds,
Mkwawa Secondary School,
IRINGA,
Tanzania.

REFERENCE

Williams, J.G., (1967) A Field Guide to the National Parks of East Africa, Collins, London.

REVIEW

ORCHIDS OF TROPICAL AFRICA. by Joyce Stewart &
Bob Campbell. Price £6.6.0. W.H. Allan,
London, 1970

This lovely book is a "must" for all orchid enthusiasts in East Africa. It consists of forty-six superb photographs by Bob Campbell, each accompanied by more than half a page of text by Joyce Stewart. All are of orchids found in East Africa, Madagascar or the Cormores. The text provides enough information about each to satisfy the botanist, the grower and the amateur and it is delightfully accurate without being too dry.

It is a shock at first to find that the photographs are not often reproduced natural size. A few are reduced; many are enlarged. The reductions may be necessarily in order to get the photograph into the page without cutting out too much of it. The enlargements are very beautiful and show all the details of the smaller orchids, which cannot be seen with the naked eye. In the text, measurements are usually given, which enable the reader to know the true size of what he is looking at, but these are difficult to find and readers may easily miss them. If a scale, or similar device, had been included below each illustration, the reader would have been able to judge the real size of the flowers at a glance.

Included also is a good introduction giving details of the climate and vegetation in which orchids are found and some general information on growing them.

Besides catering for orchid lovers, this book provides a fine picture-book for those who love beauty for its own sake. It may easily make some converts. For the greatest fascination of the orchid, besides its great variety, lies in ints combination of the beautiful with the grotesque. This is well shown in these fine pictures.

M.T.

A TANZANIAN RECORD OF A SOMALI BEE-EATER

On 22nd November, 1970 I noticed an unusual Bee-eater perched on a telegraph wire near a small salt works 10 kilometres north of Dar es Salaam. I later identified it as a Somali Bee-eater Milittophagus revoilii.

The bird was very tame and allowed close approach. It appeared to be little larger than a Little Bee-eater, M.pusillus and of similar shape. In general it had a very "washed out" appearance with few distinctive markings. The upperparts were dull green, rather darker on the wings and tail and with a light blue rump and upper tail coverts which was only noticed when the bird eventually flew off. The underparts were pale greyish buff, becoming whiter on the upper breast and throat. The only distinctive mark was a black patch behind the eye. Above this and below the green crown was a much narrower, whitish line. The bill, feet and toes were blackish. In flight it revealed the blue rump and warm buff under wing coverts. No call was heard.

It is interesting that in the week preceding this sighting, a Teita Fiscal Lanius dorsalis was seen in the vicinity and a large arrival of palearctic migrants including large flocks of Gulls and Terns occurred. Neither the Fiscal nor the Bee-eater have been recorded before or since.

W.G. Harvey,
P.O. Box 9100, DAR ES SALAAM.

CUCKOOS AT WATAMU

On their return from Watamu after Easter, my two sons reported that considerable numbers of several species of Cuckoo were passing across our plot (No.30) and were all heading south, across to Whale Rock and the Mida Creek. They amply described Clamator levaillantii and C.jocobinus. These, in small numbers, were with greater numbers of birds which could have been either Cuculus canorus, C.solitarius or C.poliocephalus and a dark bird, possibly C.clamosus. Passage commenced early in the morning and continued to about 9.30 a.m. This mass migration southwards was so unusual and interesting that I cabled and wrote to Leslie Brown, who was at Watamu and requested him particularly to check the identity of the species which he kindly did and the following is his note.

G.R. Cunningham-van Someron,
P.O. Box 24947, KAREN.

Cuculus poliocephalus AT WATAMU

On 9th April, 1971 when at my plot No. 51 at Watamu, I observed a considerable passage of small Cuckoos. This continued daily without intermission each morning until 12th April, 1971, after which it became intermittent. The last bird seen was on 19th April, 1971 but others may have passed later. Each morning there were four or five of the Cuckoos in my garden; and on going to Mida Creek beach I often saw them crossing the creek southwards. My plot is on the point between Mida Creek and the Watamu frontage, so that it is a natural concentration point. All these Cuckoos, without exception, appeared to be moving south.

A total of perhaps fifty Cuckoos were seen. The adults corresponded in every detail with the skins in the National Museum of C.poliocephalus - smaller and rather darker grey above than C.canorus. One immature, which perched in my garden with an adult, was in the characteristic reddish brown or chestnut immature plumage of this species, and the adult uttered the call "ko-ko-ko-kof" several times repeated, which is stated to be characteristic by Mackworth-Praed & Grant. This call is quite often heard in Kenya, indicating that these Cuckoos may be more common than supposed.

For these reasons I do not think there is much doubt that the Watamu Cuckoos were mainly C.poliocephalus. Since they were travelling south in a purposeful manner, deliberately flying across the creek, it seems most likely they were of the Madagascar race rochii. All the skins of this Cuckoo from Kenya are from coastal localities.

Also in the area were both Levaillant's Cuckoo Clamater levaillantii and the Black and White Cuckoo C.jacobinus; while, to add to the difficulty, I believe C.canorus was netted in the Arabuko forest at about the same time.

Leslie Brown,
P.O. Box 24916,
Karen.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

My attention has been drawn to a fair, though somewhat pedantic review of my article on waders which appeared in April's Africana magazine. Mr. Backhurst presents a picture of an ornithological omniscient who watches birds against a background of statistical data.

To me, birds are much more than so many grammes of animated, aerodynamic components, metabolising x number of milligrammes of body fat per milometre as they vector through the biosphere to and from their natal lands, instinctively navigating on astronomic fixes. Anthropomorphic or not, as far as I am concerned, Reeves bicker like some women; of course some women may bicker like Reeves. It depends whose side you are on.

More seriously, the revelation about the Spotted Redshank Tringa erythropus intrigues me. Admittedly, Jackson does not mention the bird at all and Mackworth-Praed & Grant indulges in conjecture, but Williams apparently has the temerity, in his Field Guide to National Parks, to suggest several places where the bird might be seen. Presumably this information is based on fact. If so, who is kidding whom about Spotted Redshanks?

However, may I record the background to the photograph in Africana, which apparently is unique.

On Sunday, 22nd November, 1970 Mr. Pat Sessions of Mau Narok and I were watching flocks of waders in some flooded pasture on the south side of Lake Nakuru. Simultaneously we saw and exclaimed, "Spotted Redshank!" It was standing in a large pool with some Ruffs. We watched it for several minutes and then approached it until it flew. It left with a wild cry and we clearly saw the barred feathers of the apical half of the secondaries.

The following day, helped by the Rev. Eric Waugh, I erected a hide on the side of the pool.

During the week I saw the bird twice. On Saturday, 28th November, 1970 I managed to get two photographs of the bird, including one of a Little Stint, Ruff, Spotted Redshank, Greenshank and Wood Sandpiper standing in a row on the side of the pool. The next day, Sunday, 29th November two Spotted Redshanks came to the pool and fed. I took about ten photographs on this occasion, including the picture reproduced in Africana.

As the pool was drying rapidly, I moved the hide to another pool and on Sunday, 6th December I had no less than ten Spotted Redshanks within a radius of twenty yards. They left the area during the following week.

Another unusual bird I have photographed at Lake Nakuru is a Black-headed Gull Larus ridibundus. On Saturday, 14th March, 1970 I was photographing from a hide on the north side of the lake. A flock of about thirty Grey-headed Gulls Larus cirrocephalus were bathing in front of me. Suddenly a Black-headed Gull appeared among them. I took several pictures and then watched it. By luck I had Petersen's Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe with me, so was able to compare the bird with the description very closely. Also, three days later, I went to London and had a close look at the Black-headed Gulls on one of the commons. I have no doubt about the identity of the Gull at Nakuru. The eyes are clearly discernible in the photographs and are dark, whereas other dark-headed Gulls in our region have light coloured eyes. (Mackworth-Praed & Grant). Additionally, the Black-headed Gull looks smaller than the Grey-headed Gulls in the same picture. This corresponds to information in Birds of the Atlantic Ocean - Shackleton. The Grey-headed Gulls did not take too kindly to the Black-headed Gull and after a fair amount of pestering the latter flew off.

A.J. Deane,
P.O. Box 591,
NAKURU.

Sir,

POLLUTION - A BALANCED VIEW

In my review of A.J. Deane's Africana article on "pollution" in Lake Nakuru (this Bulletin May, 1971) I drew attention to the irresponsible, alarmist reporting which pollution has aroused in Kenya recently. It is a pleasure, therefore, to read Leslie Brown's article "L. Naivasha investigation, Pesticides and Wildlife" Kenya Farmer 178, April, 1971 which gives just the balanced view that people in this country need. What a pity that the typesetting is so slapdash.

Graeme Backhurst,
138, Elibank Road,
LONDON, S.E.9, IQN.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Your Committee does its best to find good speakers and arrange interesting outings for its monthly programme of activities; but it is felt that members themselves could help a great deal in this rather difficult task by suggesting speakers or outings.

Do you know of an interesting speaker or are you one yourself? Can you suggest a venue for a field trip and are you prepared to act as a leader? Or can you talk somebody else into doing it?

Please do help. Our Secretary, Priscilla Allen, would be delighted to hear from you.

John Karmali.

REMINDERS

Members are reminded that they can obtain free, on application to the Secretary:

- Indices to the Journal, No.1-80 & 81-118
- A list of reprints and back numbers for sale,
- A list of reprints of articles by the late Mr. R.E. Moreau for sale

KITENGELA FUND

The East African Wild Life Society has asked us to inform our members that they have started a fund to purchase thousands of acres of land which border Nairobi National Park for the National Parks of Kenya. This is to aid the animals which migrate regularly through areas which are not protected from poachers and hunters.

To every group or person who purchases one acre or more at U.S.$ 3.00 (K.Shs. 21/=) per acre, a certificate will be sent stating that he has assisted in the conservation of wildlife.

For further information please write to the
Kitengela Fund,
East African Wild Life Society,
P.O. Box 20110,
NAIROBI.

FOR SALE

Miss M. Lloyd-Davies of P.O. Box 30181, Nairobi has a 1950 Edition of Jex-Blake's Gardening in East Africa for sale at Shs. 130/=. Please contact her direct at the above address, or at Telephone No.29222.

NOTICE

A Brochure about the Society is enclosed with this Bulletin. If you do not know of anyone who would like to join at once, perhaps you could put it up on some notice board in your club, hotel or office. We should like to ensure that everyone in East Africa has at least heard of the Society. You are reminded that from 1st July, new members can join for Shs. 25/= for the last half of the year.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Sunday, 11th July: Mr. John Gerhart has kindly agreed to lead a trip to Hells Gate, Naivasha on 11th July. As the aim of the trip is to see Lammergeyers and Lanners hunting, members are asked to meet at the Y.M.C.A. Camp, Naivasha at 3.00 p.m. and should expect to stay until dark. You are also reminded that the Gorge is very dusty and it can get very cold there towards the evening.

Monday, 19th July: Mr. Stewart Keith of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, will give a lecture on 'Recording Forest Birds' at the lecture hall, National Museum at 5.15 p.m. He will play some of his recordings.

Sunday, 25th July: Mr. M.P. Clifton, the Entomologist at the National Museum will lead a 'Dudu Crawl' in the Karura Forest. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m.

Saturday, 31st July - Monday, 2nd August: Week-End Camp at Kindaruma Dam on the Tana River. By kind permission of the Station Engineer.
Leaders: Miss Angwin, Mrs. Campbell.
Distance from Nairobi to Kindaruma is about 120 miles. Members should be self-contained with regard to ample equipment, food and water. Please meet the leaders on Saturday, 31st July on the Garissa Road where the tarmac ends (about 10 miles past Thika) at 2.00 p.m. The area offers a rich variety of bird life and flora and in the dry season the dam formed by the Tana River Hydro-Electric Scheme, attracts a large number of animals. Those wishing to join, please fill in and return the enclosed form

Reminder: Wednesday morning bird walks meet at 9.00 a.m. at the National Museum, Nairobi.

Notice to Contributors: Please continue to send your material to John Karmali at P.O. Box 2202, Nairobi. Contribution will be published as soon after receipt as possible, subject to the limitations of space, time of voluntary workers and size of Bulletin.

Ag. Editor

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EANHS

BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
JUN 14 1972
LIBRARIES

Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN AUGUST, 1971

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MOVEMENT OF MIGRANTS

AT AMBOSELI: seen between 14th and 17th April, 1971;

KESTREL Falco t. tinnunculus: 3 seen on telegraph posts at Sultan Hamud.
EUROPEAN SWALLOW Hirundo r. rustica: large flocks coming to roost in the reed beds in the evenings.
RED BACKED SHRIKE Laniarius c. collurio: single male seen.
PIED WHEATEAR Oenanthe pleschanka: single bird seen.

AT LOIYANGALANI, Lake Rudolf: seen between 25th and 29th April, 1971;

EUROPEAN SWALLOW Hirundo r. rustica: large flights passing in a north-easterly direction. On 3rd May a considerable number were seen passing over the Baragoi/Maralal track in a north-easterly direction.
WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN Sterna leucoptera: each evening large flocks with nearly all birds in breeding plumage roosted at the north-east corner of El Molo bay. Some remained during the day and were to be seen hawking insects over the water; the majority, however, had moved on.
GULL-BILLED TERN Sterna n. nilotica: the change in plumage was not so advanced with this species although there were a number with newly black heads. Their numbers were not so great as the preceding species.
WHISKERED TERN Sterna hybrida: a few in breeding plumage were seen flying with the White-winged Black Terns; they were not so advanced in their plumage change.
CASPIAN TERN Sterna tschegrava: a number were seen flying over and a small flock rested for the night on some mud flats.
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL Larus f. fuscus: a few were seen resting on the water's edge.
LITTLE TERN Sterna albifrons saudersi: 3 or 4 individuals seen.
LITTLE STINT Calidris minuta: many to be seen feeding along the water's edge.

BLACK TAILED GODWIT _Limosa l. limosa:_ a flock of about twelve birds seen on the evening of 27th April.

COMMON SANDPIPER _Tringa hypoleucos_: individuals seen along the water's edge.

REDSHANK _Tringa t. totanus_: seen feeding in the shallows, their calls ringing out over the water.

GREENSHANK _Tringa nebularia_: in small numbers with other waders.

CURLEW SANDPIPERS _Calidris ferruginea_: in fairly large flocks; many of the males were well advanced in their breeding plumage.

MARSH SANDPIPER _Tringa stagnatilis:_ a few seen with other waders.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER _Charadrius dubius curonicus:_ a single bird seen.

BLUE HEADED WAGTAIL _Motacilla f. flava_: a single bird seen with some goats.

KESTREL _Falco t. tinnunculus_: a single bird seen.

GLOSSY IBIS _Plegadis f. falcinellus_: numerous around the lake edge.

NIGHT HERON _Nycticorax n. nycticorax_: there was a small colony on the island and two more colonies in the crevices of the El Molo island cliffs shared with Long-tailed Cormorants and Darters. I suspect that these colonies are resident as they had juveniles with them.

GREY HERON _Ardea c. cinerea_: a number were around the lake edge fishing in the shallows.

C.E. Norris,
P.O. Box 2406,
NAIROBI.

CORRECTION

There was an error in the last sentence of Hazel Britton's report on the Society's Nest Record Scheme published on pages 110-111 of the July issue of the Bulletin. The correct sentence should read: "In a society as large as ours there is no reason why our annual number of cards should not exceed 1000." (Not 100 as printed!)

Editor.

TRIPS TO BARINGO LODGE

Two trips to Lake Baringo Lodge were organised in July on special "off-season" terms kindly offered to us by Mrs. Houry and Mrs. Skinner who are members of the Society. It seems sad that this should be an "off-season" time as it must be the most beautiful time of the year in that part of the world. The whole of that dry country was covered with flowers. The first party included Mrs. Tweedie of Kitale, who is a botanist, and it is a pity that most of us were so bewitched by the birds that we did not take much advantage of her presence.

Bird-watchers did indeed have a wonderful time. The lake itself was perhaps not so very exciting, as the migrants were away, except for a few Swallows which seem to have been left behind. But on dry land most of the birds were breeding and there was much activity. Didric Cuckoos were especially conspicuous, chasing and calling the whole time. Of other species several nests were found. A Pale Flycatcher was sitting on a nest in the lodge garden and some members were fortunate enough to see a Violet-backed Sunbird enter its otherwise quite invisible nest. In dead trees in the garden Red-fronted Barbets and Beared Woodpeckers had their holes. The latter were particularly amusing to watch, as a Lilac-breasted Roller liked to use the top of their dead tree as a perch and they did not like this at all and would climb up and peck its toes. Sometimes they managed to drive it away and sometimes it retaliated and drove them off. The Lodge garden was indeed a lovely place to sit after tramping about in the sun. Spotted Morning-Warblers hopped about on the lawn like thrushes and in the bushes a young Black-&-White Cuckoo was being fed by a pair of Bulbuls.

Several birds reminded us that we were a good way north. Fan-tailed Ravens were common. Jackson's Hornbill was often seen and even occasional Hemprich's. The Red Bishop Euplectes orix, the Yellow-crowned Bishop Euplectes afra and the Little Weaver Ploceus luteolus all seemed to be nesting along the shore.

All this was enjoyed against the background of the Lodge and its comfort and good food. It is no wonder that the trips were so popular that we have been asked several times if we cannot arrange more. But they gave the Secretaries so much work and worry that we hesitate to start again. Owing to last minute withdrawals we were left on each occasion, with a quarter of the places vacant within three days of starting. There was a waiting list; but at such a late hour most of the people on it had made other arrangements for the weekend. We were sorry for those who fell out. They all had good reasons; but if another trip is arranged, members will have to share the responsibility with us by sending their money ten days before starting (the Society has to send payment to the Lodge in advance), and they will forfeit it if they have to fall out and substitutes cannot be found. This will, perhaps, encourage members to take great care of themselves, their cars and their children during the last few days!

Priscilla Allen,
Hon. Secretary.

BLACK-BILLED BARBET AND CHESTNUT-FRONTED SHRIKE BREEDING IN KENYA

Virtually nothing is known of the breeding of either species in this note and eggs are undescribed; so that it seems worthwhile documenting a breeding record for each species even though circumstances prevented us seeing eggs or young.

Black-billed Barbet _Lybius guifsobalito_:

It is only comparatively recently that this species was first recorded in Kenya by Payne (1967) and Zimmerman (1967); but it is not uncommon, even if rather local, in the Nyanza Province of Western Kenya. On 4th April, 1970 we observed two adults carrying red berries into a hole in a dead tree about five metres above the ground, at Lake Kanyaboli in Central Nyanza. The tree was close to the lake edge and was surrounded by a thick mass of impenetrable _Lantana_, so that it was effectively inaccessible. The birds were presumably feeding young, as two adults visited the hole frequently with food. Later the same month, Miss E.J. Blencowe reported a pair showing interest in a hole in a dead stump on the Kisumu golf course and it seems likely that they were going to breed there, although it may have been only a roosting place.

Chestnut-fronted Shrike Prionops scopifrons:
While camping on sandy soil in the Sokoke-Arabuko Forest near Mida, we noticed an adult sitting tight on a nest at 0700 on 13th April, 1971. The nest was situated some eight metres above the ground at a fork on a thick branch of a large tree alongside the Mida-Jilore track. Unfortunately it was too high to be inspected, even from the roof of a Landrover with a mirror on a long pole. Although situated on a branch sloping at about 30° to the horizontal the bird was sitting more or less horizontally, as the lower end of the nest cup was deeper than the upper end. It was made of fine fibres rather than coarse material like rootlets and sticks. We observed the bird until our departure at 1030 and it sat tight the whole time so that it seems most likely that it was sitting on eggs. Several parties of this species were seen in the immediate vicinity but none attempted to communicate with the sitting bird.

Peter & Hazel Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School ,
Private Bag,
YALA.

REFERENCES:

Payne, R.B. (1967) Ostrich 38 : 283
Zimmerman, D.A. (1967) Auk 84 : 594-595

AN INTERESTING MORNING SPENT AT AHERO

Ahero is an important market town lying in the middle of the Kano Plain, Nyanza. It is also well known for the extensive Rice Schemes being developed there, which provide excellent feeding grounds for large numbers of Ducks, Geese, Waders, Terns, etc.

I visited Ahero on 8th May, 1971 following several weeks of heavy rain. The paddy fields were mostly being flooded and the local people were very busy planting the young rice. In the as yet unflooded fields there were groups of Waders, and whilst watching a group of Black-winged Stilt I noticed, standing with them, a Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus-Pallas* in full breeding dress. After about twenty minutes of preening it started feeding, paddling round in small circles in deepish puddles and thrusting its entire head, neck and even occasionally its shoulders, under the water. Following the comments in an Editorial Review in the May Bulletin I thought this sighting worth recording.

Later that morning, whilst watching Hottentot Teal feeding, I noticed a Long-toed Lapwing *Hemiparra crassirostris - Hartlaub* in the next field, run to join its mate whenever an African walked along the dividing bank. After watching for about an hour, I was certain there was a nest, but with the large number of local people about, it would have been foolhardy to investigate then. (see postscript).

Whilst contemplating how best to follow this up I was watching a group of White-winged Black Terns, in non-breeding dress, flying over the inundated plots when amongst them I noticed a Whiskered Tern. The black cap and white cheeks were very noticeable and the bird was more cobby than the White-winged Black Terns. The chin, breast and belly were slate black and the vent white. This, according to Mackworth-Praed and Grant would seem to indicate it to be the African race *Chilidonias hybrida sclateri* - Math. and Ired; although it does not fit in well with their distribution range.

As I drove back to Kisumu for my Sunday lunch I reflected that, whilst Ahero is always interesting, this morning had been particularly so.

V.R. Simpson,
P.O. Box 25,
MASENO.

POSTSCRIPT:

On 13th May, 1971 I arrived at the field with the Long-toed Lapwing's nest at 6.00 a.m. and erected a hide twenty feet from the nest. However, the sitting bird would not return although it made two half-hearted efforts, so I packed up my camera and hide - and within two minutes of my doing so it was back on the nest! The nest itself was a shallow depression lined roughly with coarse grass roots and stems. The four eggs were very reminiscent of a European Lapwing's - khaki coloured blotched with dark olive.

V.R. Simpson.

CORAL STARFISH RESEARCH GROUP

Two biology students from Oxford are working on the coast for a short time investigating the present local position of the Crown-of-thorns Starfish *Acanthaster planci* which is doing such damage on the Great Barrier Reef along the Australian coast. This creature, it may be remembered, eats coral. That is to say, it sucks out the living animal, leaving nothing but a dead skeleton.

It seems to occur all over the world, including the Red Sea and the East African coast, but only in Australia has it become a plague. How and why it has done so nobody knows. Some ecological change must have taken place and the effects may be far-reaching.

A known predator is the owner of the big Triton shell beloved of tourists and obviously these molluscs should be strictly protected as a first step, though it is not likely that they control the population of starfish all by themselves. Another possible predator is a shrimp *Hymenocera picta*, and this is the special object of study by the Oxford team.

An illustrated article on the Starfish by Dr. & Mrs. Talbot appeared in the last issue of "Endeavour" and is available in our library. The Talbots worked in Zanzibar for five years with the E.A. Marine Fisheries Research Organization and are now in Australia continuing their work on Coral Reef ecology.

Priscilla Allen,
Hon. Secretary.

MOVEMENT OF RESIDENT SPECIES AT LAKE RUDOLF

The following were noticed: at Lake Rudolf between 25th and 29th April, 1971:

WHITE PELICAN Pelecanus onocrotalus: a large flight came into the bay on the afternoon of 28th April from the north; upon arrival they immediately started to fish.

AVOCET Recurvirostra a. avosetta: a flock was seen on the evening of 25th April but was absent on 27th.

LESSER FLAMINGO Phoenicopterus minor: most of the birds seen in a small flock were juvenile. The size of the flock fluctuated.

GREATER FLAMINGO Phoenicopterus ruber roseus: only individuals seen with the Lesser Flamingoes. They only stayed in the bay for a very short time.

BREEDING AT LAKE RUDOLF

On a small island situated at the Northern end of the El Molo bay the following species were found nesting, with eggs:

WHITE NECKED CORMORANT Phalacrocorax carbo lucidus
SACRED IBIS Threskiornis a. aethiopica
AFRICAN SPOONBILL Platalea alba
LITTLE EGRET Egretta g. garzetta: one individual in a dark grey plumage phase was sitting on a nest.
EGYPTIAN GOOSE Alopochen aegyptiaca: the El Molo fishermen were taking these eggs.

SPOTTED THICKNEE Burhinus c. capensis: it was suspected these were also nesting but no nest was found.

GREY-HEADED GULL Larus cirrocephalus: were present in large numbers but had not started to nest as their territory only contained old nests.

SPECKLED PIGEON Columba g. guinea: were also present and I suspect were nesting, or contemplating nesting, as no nest was found.

On the mainland the following nests were found:

SPUR-WING PLOVER Vanellus spinosus
KITTLITZ'S PLOVER Charadrius p. pecuarius
LESSER BROWN-NECKED RAVEN Corvus ruficollis edithae
EGYPTIAN GOOSE Alopechen aegyptiaca: one pair had four goslings; others were establishing nesting territories within the rock outcrops.

C.E. Norris,
P.O. Box 2406,
NAIROBI

FOR SALE

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For more details contact:

Jill Donisthorpe,
P.O. Box 5896,
NAIROBI.
Tel: 29995.

ALSO

Jex-Blake's Gardening in East Africa (1950) edition. Price Shs. 130/=. Please contact the Editor.

CUCKOOS ALONG THE MAGADI ROAD

Over the period of the whole of April and the first week of May this year, we have carried out a regular survey at weekends down the Magadi Road from K 20 to K 60, across Ololkisaili and the Olekemonge Plains.

Cuckoos have been unusually abundant, particularly pairs or parties of Clamator glandarius. Numbers of C. jacobinus were seen regularly along the road and a few C. levaillantii. Very numerous and not too easy to identify were Cuculus canorus and C. solitarius with possibly the rarer C. canorus gularis. All were extremely shy and few gave sufficient time for us to obtain a really good view. By 8th May most of these birds had disappeared but C. solitarius were still still numerous and calling C. clamosus were also present here and there. On 24th and 25th April, we counted over one hundred of these birds each day.

Also present in numbers and holding territories were Chrysococcyx caprius which were frequent visitors to Weaver colonies (last year we raised one from the nest of Ploceus intermedius).

On 1st May near Ololkisaili, we located the nest of Cercotrichas leucophrys with c/2 eggs and with two Cuckoo eggs, one round, bright blue, 22 x 18 mm, possibly of C. jacobinus (which we saw in the vicinity) or C. clamosus and the second a long egg of olive green, faintly speckled with yellowish-brown and which measured 24 x 18 mm, most likely of C. solitarius (similar to known eggs from Karen). The nest and eggs was photographed but alas on 8th May we found the nest robbed (by a mongoose?) and only broken shells below. Thus the real identity of the Cuckoo species remains uncertain for it is unwise to assign these eggs to any one species as the evidence shows that there is a great deal of variation in size, shape and colour amongst Cuckoo eggs. (H. Friedman (1948) The Parasitic Cuckoos of Africa and (1949). Ibis 91 p. 514-519)

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947,
KAREN.

CUCKOO FALCON IN NAIROBI

At about mid-day on 22nd July, 1971 a Cuckoo Falcon Aviceda cuculoides carrying prey flew into a tree near the intersection of Selous Road and Sykes Road on the southern part of Nairobi Hill.

It stayed for about half an hour and was observed in detail, first eating an Agamid lizard and then flying onto different branches of the tree.

It was interesting to note this forest species in a relatively open area.

Fleur Ng'weno ,
NAIROBI .

A LAMMERGEYER GYPAETUS BARBATUS SEEN IN THE NAIROBI AREA

Whilst flying from Wilson Airport on 17th July, 1971 I was just south of the Ngong Hills when I saw a large "vulturine" bird which, on being passed and silhouetted against the skyline, was identified as a Lammergeyer. The bird must have been flying at about 7,000 ft, approximately half a mile in from the Rift Wall. It is therefore encouraging to note that there is at least one other bird, apart from those at Hell's Gate.

I wonder if any other records of this species come from this area? In the issue of the Bulletin for February, 1971 there was a request by Mr. E.S. Brown and myself for any ideas as to the identification of some of the birds seen in the Mandera region of Northern Kenya. As yet there has been no response; any suggestions would be welcomed.

C.F. Dewhurst,
E.A.A.F.R.O.
MUGUGA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

On the Natural History Society outing to Ol Donyo Sabuk on Sunday, 23rd May, several members showed an interest in plants I collected. With the help of Dr. Greenway and Mr. Faden at the East African Herbarium I identified the plants and hope that members will recognise them from the brief notes.

By Fourteen Falls:

Pavetta teitensis K. Schum (Rubiaceae: bush with dark green leaves and flowers at the farthest point of the path.

Taccaza apiculata Oliv. (Asclepiadaceae): liane with milky sap and red flowers overhanging start of the path.

Crossandra subacaulis C.B.Cl. (Scrophulariaceae): herb with spike of large salmon pink flowers.

Cissus quadrangularis L. (Vitaceae): climber with square stem.

Tarenna graveolans Brem. (Rubiaceae): climber with sweet scented white flowers.

Psychotria riparia Petit (Rubiaceae): small tree with leathery leaves.

Hippocratea africana Loes. (Celastraceae): climber with green flowers.

Euclea divinorum Hiern (Ebenaceae): small tree with red berries.

Ol Donyo Sabuk summit:

Cassipourea melanosana Alston (Rhizophoraceae): large tree over seat.

Impatiens nana Engl.& Warb. (Balsaminaceae): small pink balsam below tree.

Triumfetta macrophylla K. Schum. (Tiliaceae): bush with ragged yellow flowers and prickly spherical reddish fruit.

Conopharyngia sp. (Apocynaceae): small tree with glossy leaves and large white sweet scented flowers.

Rytigynia schumanii Robyns (Rubiaceae): bush with glossy leaves and small white bell shaped flowers.

Sparmannia ricinocarpa O. Ktze. (Tiliaceae): bush with white flowers.

Cyathula schimperiana Moq. (Amaranthaceae): herb with woolly white flowers in dense spikes and red young shoots.

Pilea sp. (Umbelliferae): low creeping herb with white flowers.

Ol Donyo Sabuk slopes:

Conyza schimperi Sch. Bip. (Compositae): herb with deeply serrate leaves and heads of small yellow florets.

Faurea slaigna Harv. (Proteaceae): tree with spikes of mauve flowers.

Gnidia subcordata Meissn. (Thymeliaceae): woody herb with white flowers and glaucous leaves.

Tephrosia holstii Taub. (Papilionaceae): herb with pinkish orange flowers.

Triumfetta rhomboidea Jacq. (Tiliaceae): bush with ragged yellow flowers.

Lysimacha volkensii Engl. (Primulaceae): herb with small pink flowers.

Cassia kirkii Oliv.var. kirkii (Papilionaceae): herb with yellow flowers.

Cassia hildebrantii Vatke (Papilionaceae): herb with yellow flowers.

I must point out that I only took fragments of plants for idintification from Ol-Donyo Sabuk.

Mrs. S.A. Robertson,
C.R.C. Tebere,
c/o Mwea Irrigation Scheme,
P.O. Box 80,
KERUGOYA, Central Province .

Sir,

PALM-NUT VULTURE GYPOHIERAX ANGOLENSIS (Gmelin)

While a party of us were fishing the Amboni River, Mweiga, in June, 1965 we were surprised to flush a fine G. angolensis from a clearing along the river in the forest. It struck us at the time that this was a very odd locality to see such a bird.

Searching around there was no evidence that it had been feeding nor were there any Elaeis guinensis palms in the vicinity with which the bird is usually associated. Dr. Greenway (per. com.) states that to his knowledge there are no Elaeis recorded from Mount Kenya and the nearest would be on the Tana River below Embu. Moreau (1933) and Landsborough Thompson and Moreau (1957) pointed out that Gypoheirax does take fish, fresh water crabs and flesh, the two former are available in the Amboni and other streams.

Phoenix reclinata palms are fairly numerous in this area and I wonder if the bird could have been feeding on their fruits? Can anybody confirm this or make suggestions for the presence of Gypohierax in this apparently unusual area. Are there any records of the bird from the Aberdares or Mount Kenya?

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947,
KAREN.

REFERENCES:

Landsborough-Thompson A, & Moreau, R.E. (1957) Feeding habits of the Palm-nut Vulture, Gypohierax. IBIS 99(4) pp 608-613

Moreau, R.E. (1933) A note on the Distribution of the Vulturire Fish-Eagle, Gypohierax angolensis Gmel. Journal of Animal Ecology Vol. 2. No. 2 pp 179-183

BOOKS PRESENTED TO THE LIBRARY BY MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Bristowe, W.S. - The World of Spiders (New Naturalist series), 1958.
Brown, Leslie - Eagles. 1955.
Day, Adela M. - Sunshine and Rain in Uganda. 1932.
Maberly, C.T. Astley - Animals of East Africa. 1962.
Thomas, Bertram - Arabia Felix. 1932.
Thomas, Bertram - The Arabs. 1937.
Urban, Emil K. & Leslie H. Brown - A Checklist of the Birds of Ethiopia. 1971

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

SPARROWHAWKS

In connection with a proposed ecological study of East African Sparrowhawks, I would be most grateful to receive data concerning breeding localities and nest finds of all Sparrowhawks Accipiter spp., including Gabar Goshawk Melierax gabar and Lizard Buzzard Kaupifalco monogrammicus from Kenya.

Thank you very much in advance.

Chris Smeenk,
Tsavo Research Project ,
P.O. Box 14,
VOI.

BIRDS & CITRUS

A member of the Society at present working in the Seychelles has heard anxiety expressed with regard to the proposed planting of Citrus trees on Frigate Island.

The Seychelles are the only known home of the "Pie chanteuse" or Magpie Robin Copsychus sechellarum, and there is a theory that Citrus trees are positively harmful to birds, not merely negatively by replacing their habitat. In this case enough of the habitat would be left.

If anyone knows anything about the relationship between birds and Citrus trees, would he please let the Secretary know.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

As members are no doubt aware, we issue the Journal in addition to the Bulletin. The former is designed for the more scientifically minded members of the Society, whereas the Bulletin is mainly for the less learned and junior members.

It is therefore important that the Bulletin does not become too scientific. Contributors are therefore requested to help in maintaining this distinction and to use English as well as scientific names.

If I may now change my hat; all contributions so far received have now been used up in the current issue of the Bulletin, with the exception of one paper. Will contributors therefore please send in material for the September issue which will go to press in the last week of August.

The address is still P.O. Box 2202, Nairobi.

John Karmali,
President and
Acting Editor.

THE MOUNTAIN LODGE

On Mount Kenya - the newest and most exciting game lookout - is offered to Kenya residents at 50% reduction up to 30th November, 1971.

Direct bookings only to African Tours and Hotels.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Saturday, 21st August:

Miss Allen will lead a bird walk on 21st August. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m. and bring a picnic tea.

Monday, 23rd August:

A film, "Dr. Leakey and the Dawn of Man" will be shown in the National Museum hall at 5.15 p.m. Members are asked to try and arrive on time as it is very disturbing to have people walking in half way through.

Sunday, 29th August:

A day walk has been arranged for coast members, or those who may be down there on holiday. Mrs. Fleur Ng'weno will lead a walk to study an area on the north coast. Please meet at Coraldene Beach Cottages, five miles north of Mombasa at 9.00 a.m.

In September, Mr. Peter Nares, Director of the Nairobi Snake Park, has very kindly agreed to lead a study trip to the Kerio Valley. Due to the distance involved and the interest of the area this will be about a five night trip, but members will be free to leave when the wish. The Kerio Valley is a very interesting area from every angle of natural history and the trip will be very interesting for those members who can take a few days off work. Details of the trip will be printed in the September Bulletin.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
JUN 14 1972
LIBRARIES

Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 1971

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SEPTEMBER

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FISHES OF THE KENYA REEF: III

The families described in this note are of restricted size, and comprise one to few genera and a comparatively small number of species. Most of them are, however, spectacular or curious and always excite interest when seen. Their occurrence is frequent enough to rate them all as common genera along our reef.

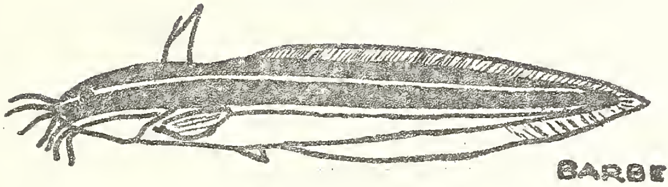
19 PLOTISIDAE, the barbel eels. Smith & Smith (1963) list two species as occurring at the Seychelles, and there seems no good reason why both should not be found along our reef. However, I have only seen one species; this is Plotosus arab (40cm), which has a distinctive black body and two horizontal whitish stripes. The young are common, occurring in large dense shoals. The second species, P. anguillaris (100cm), is brownish but of identical shape.

As can be seen from the illustration, barbel eels have an elongate body which tapers to a point. They are without scales. There are four pairs of barbels around the mouth and a serrated spine in front of the dorsal fin and one in each pectoral. These fish should be handled with extreme care as the serrated spines are venomous, the stabs agonising and potentially dangerous. The mass movement of a dense shoal of young (10cm) eels is worthy of study: they move as one, with a flowing precision that is most attractive.

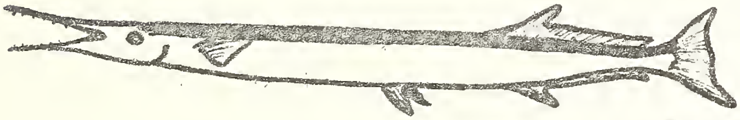
These two marine species belong to the large order Nematognathii (worm-mouths) which include the fresh water catfish and barbels, some one thousand species of them. Fifty or more occur in our East African lakes and rivers.

20 TYLOSURIDAE, the garfishes. Fierce predators of the lagoon, garfish are frequently seen hunting in small packs near the surface of the water. While they are recorded as attaining lengths of up to 150cm, those observed at Diani rarely exceed 50cm. This is possibly just as well, as they sport a most formidable dentition. Superbly shaped for their active predaceous role, they leap and skip about on the surface when in pursuit of prey. We have had one hop into our small dinghy; it happened to be in luck as the boat invariably carries some water, owing to leaks, and thus it survived. The species (Tylosurus) are all similar.

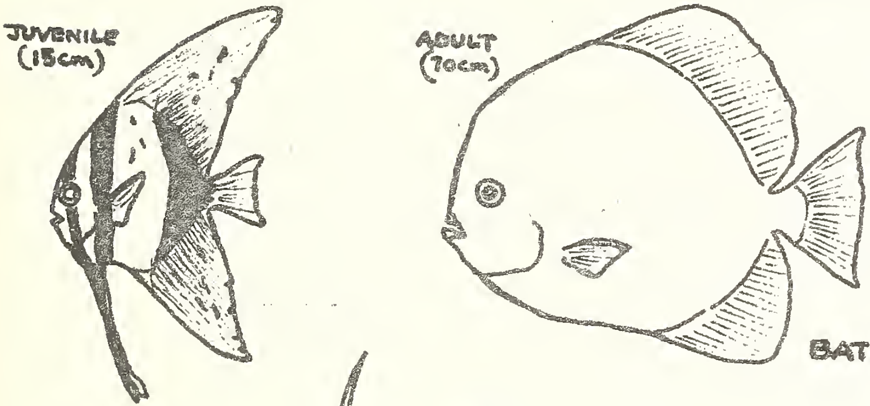
FISHES OF THE KENYA REEF



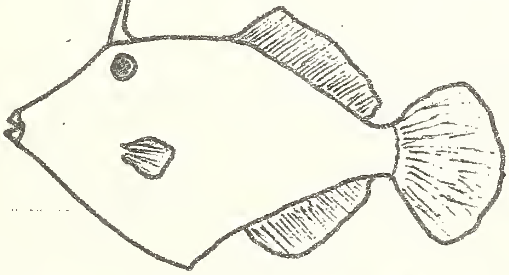
BARBEL EEL



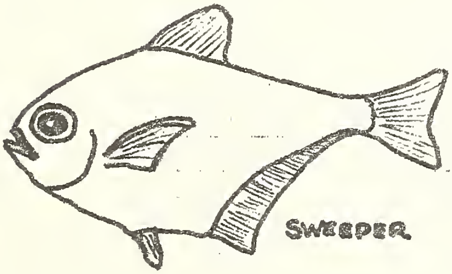
GARFISH


JUVENILE (15cm)
ADULT (70cm)

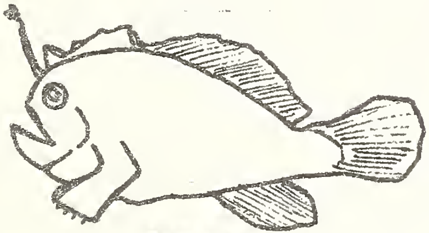
BATFISH



FILEFISH



SWEEPER



TOADFISH

21. *PLATACIDAE*, the batfish. I have illustrated both the juvenile and adult forms: batfish are one of many of our fish which change quite remarkably in shape with age. We have one species only, *Platax pinnatus*. The young are common at Diani; we have on several occasions recorded two or more in a pool. When seen in an aquarium, the remarkable and unmistakable juvenile batfish shape attracts immediate attention. In natural habitats, they merge with their surroundings. Against a background of brown *Cymodocea* weed and rock they are virtually invisible. The colour is variable, though two basic colour forms, dark brown and yellow, seem to predominate.

22. *POMACANTHIDAE*, the angel fish. Included in this family are some of the most attractive of all fish. They are true coral pool and reef inhabitants and, in movement, form and habit are the essence of tropical reef fish. They may be confused with the damsel or coral fish (POMACENTRIDAE), from which, however, they may be readily distinguished by a strong gill (preopercle) spine (see illustration).

The nomenclature of this family is confused and confusing. For example, Hugh Copley (1944: A Popular Guide to some of the Fishes of the Coral Reef) refers to the sacred angel fish as *Holacanthus semicirculatus*. Smith and Smith (1965 edition; The Sea Fishes of Southern Africa) name it *Pomacanthus semicirculatus*. The same authors, Smith and Smith (1963: The Fishes of Seychelles) list it as *Pomacanthops semicirculatus*. I have used the names given in The Fishes of Seychelles, which includes the Smiths' most recent generic nomenclature.

In several species the differences between juveniles and adult forms is very marked; these must have presented the earlier systematists either with (pleasant) nightmares or pink faces. No illustration can hope to do justice to the sheer beauty of form and colour. I have illustrated *Pomacanthodes striatus* merely to draw attention to the marked difference between young and adult specimens. The drawing of an adult *Pomacanthops filamentosus* indicates the similarities of adult form of different species.

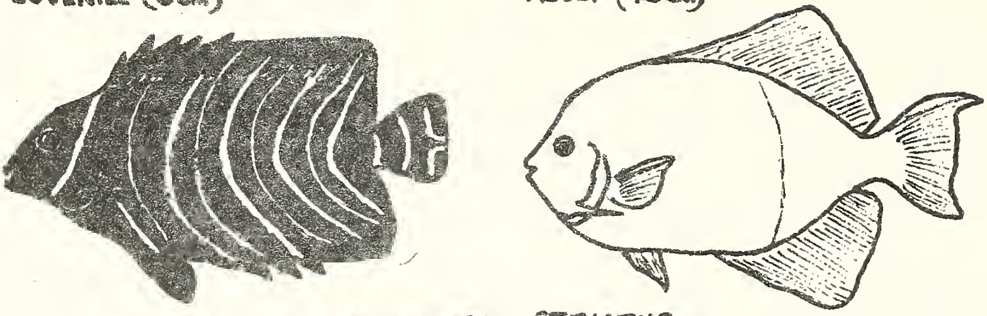
Four genera are likely to be encountered along the reef and in rocky coral pools of the shore: *Centropyge*, *Pomacanthodes*, *Pomacanthops* and *Pygoplites*. *Pygoplites diacanthus* is present at Diani, but is only infrequently observed; it is an outstandingly attractive fish. The background colour is an orange-red with a number of brilliant blue vertical bars, edged with black. I have been unable to decide whether the common *Centropyge* is *C. multispinis* or *C. bispinosus*. Whichever species, the genus at least is unmistakable. They are very dark coloured, brown to black, with darker cross bars: the margins of the fins are a brilliant blue. *Pomacanthodes chrysurus* is a deep rich brown, with a series of curved, yellow, horizontal bars; the bright orange or yellow tail is a good identification mark. *Pomacanthops filamentosus*, which is widespread throughout the Western Indian Ocean, appears to be more common north of Mombasa.

It is curious that Copley (1944) lists *Pomacanthops (Holacanthus, Pomacanthus) semicirculatus* as being "by far and away the most common of our angel fishes." While this may be true of the Kilifi-Malindi area (comments from resident Malindi gogglers?) we have not yet observed this species at Diani or Kisiti Island, off Shimoni. It is almost certain to be present, but one would not call it "most common" in relation to casual goggling.

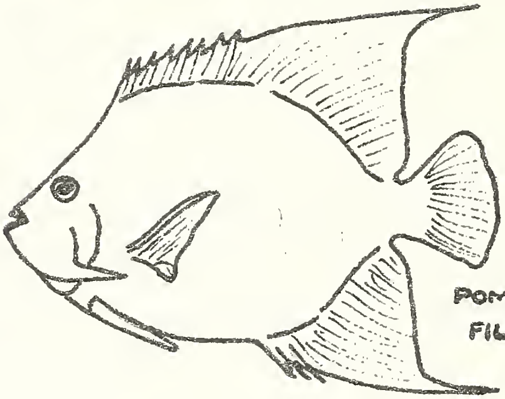
23. *ZANCLIDAE*, the Moorish Idols. The common species, *Zanclus cornutus* (Copley lists it as *Z. canescens*), is so well known that it hardly merits description. Smith and Smith (1963) list two species as occurring at Seychelles; *canescens* is distinguished from *cornutus* by possessing "an outward and backwardly directed spine above angle of mount."

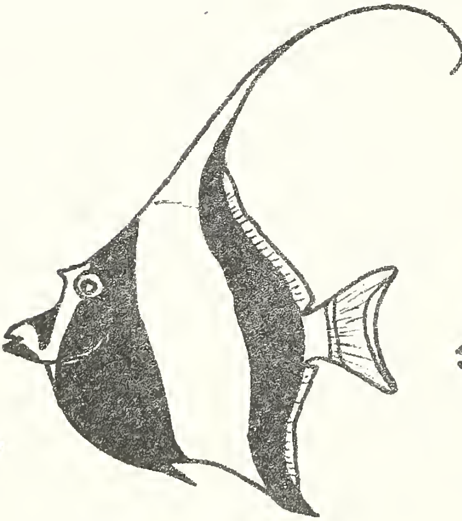
Newcomers to goggling in our waters may confuse the Moorish Idol with the Coachman, *Heniochus acuminatus*. The latter belongs to the butterfly fish family (*Chaetodontidae*). Both species have one long filamentous dorsal spine. I have illustrated these two fish; it may be seen that they are very different. I have not found any reliable references as to the reason why the Moorish Idol is (was) held in special, almost religious esteem by Eastern Mohammedan peoples. (Would any one care to enlighten us?) It has a wide distribution throughout the Indian and South Pacific Oceans.

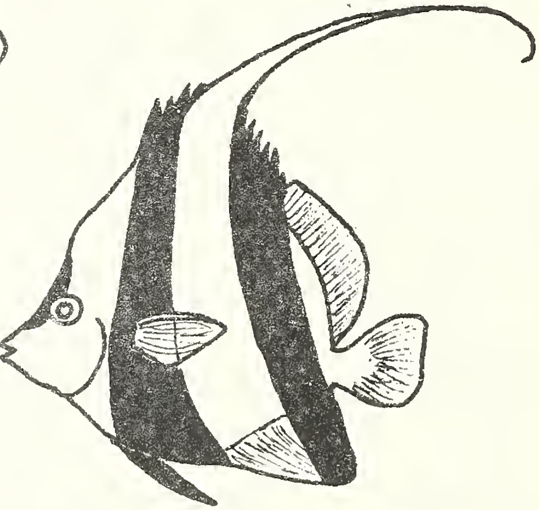
24. *PEMPHERIDAE*, the Sweepers. The deep, laterally compressed body of our common sweeper, *Pempheris ovalensis*, is of an unmistakable shape. They occur in shoals of varying size, often large, in reef pools and around coral bosses and rocks in the lagoon, but are always encountered near cover. Although they appear brownish in the water, the colour is a softly irridescent pink or brick-red when examined in sunlight out of the water.


JUVENILE (8cm)
ADULT (40cm)

POMACANTHODES STRIATUS


POMACANTHOPS FILAMENTOSUS


MOORISH IDOL


COACHMAN

25. MONACANTHIDAE, the file fish, are common and are easily recognised; they may, however, be confused with the trigger fish Balistidae. Both families have a virtually identical "trigger" mechanism, whereby the first dorsal spine can be locked erect by the second modified spine. They may be distinguished principally by the presence or absence of scales: filefish are without normal scales or, where present, they are much modified and minute and the skin is rough (the 'file'). Trigger fish are normally scaled. Less scientifically perhaps, but a useful distinguishing guide to our commoner species is the position of the 'trigger' or spine in relation to the eye. In file fish this is immediately above the eye; in trigger fish it is located some distance behind the eye. In common with trigger fish, the bitter flesh of many is reputed to be poisonous. It is possible that the toxic principle is confined to the skin, as we have observed (though rarely) specimens being skinned by local fishermen.

The extended, fairly pronounced snouts of these fish apparently enable them to extract tube worms from their tubes and small crustaceans from otherwise inaccessible retreats. We have recorded Amanses and Pervagor species from Diani. There is an interesting, easily observed example of mimicry among the file fishes. One common species, Paraluteres prionurus, has accurately mimicked one of the sharp-nosed puffers, Canthigaster valentini. Fairly close examination is necessary to distinguish small specimens: the colouration is a perfect match. The file fish is given away by a rudimentary 'trigger', no more than a bump, and the more extensive dorsal and anal fins. This 'bogus puffer' rests secure in the fact that the flesh of the real Canthigaster is left severely alone by predators.

The third family in the 'trigger' series is the ALUTERIDAE, or leather jackets. Here the skin is velvety, scales having been completely suppressed. The dorsal or trigger spine is set above or well before the eye, and is always very slender to filamentous, or absent.

26. ANTENNARIDAE, the toad fish or fishing frogs. Species of this curious, fascinating family are far more common than would be guessed. Their camouflage, essential to their professional 'fishing' activities, is perfect; their odd shape and sluggish movements belie the fact that they are, among the smaller fish, a fierce and successful family of predators. They have squat, lumpy bodies; the pectoral fins are elongated and bent, simulating an elbow - these movable 'arms' clasp weeds most efficiently. The dorsal fin has separate spines in front, the first of these is set far forward, and is modified by a flap or a bundle of whiskers into a lure.

The lure is enticingly joggled; any small fish that investigates this interesting movement is suddenly engulfed, in a short single forward lunge, into the enormous mouth. We once happened to have four coral fish (about 4-5 cm long) sharing a tank with one 6cm toad fish (*Antennarius*) we were studying. We missed one coral fish; the culprit regurgitated it on being returned to his own seaweed patch next morning. Their elastic stomachs can presumably accommodate even larger prey.

Two genera are common, *Antennarius* (to 10cm, with several species) and *Histrio histrio* (7cm). Colour is variable, from deep red-brown to yellow, but it is almost always a perfect match with the background weed or weed-covered rocks.

Ken Bock,
EAAFRO, Muguga,
P.O. Box 30148,
NAIROBI.

ON THE NESTING OF THE "CHESTNUT-BANDED" OR "MAGADI PLOVER" *Charadrius pallidus venustus* FISCHER AND REICHENOW, AT LAKE NAKURU

Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1955) give the distribution of *C. venustus* as "believed to be confined to Lakes Magadi and Natron" and record breeding at Lake Magadi in the long and short rains. I can confirm this over many years of observation; see van Someren (1956). Williams (1967) does not list the Chestnut-banded Plover for Lake Nakuru. Recently Britton (per. com) wrote saying, "is *C. venustus* at Lake Nakuru the first Kenya record away from Lake Magadi?". This was a comment on E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record Card Cvs/1969/4 and 5.

My first record of the Plover nesting at Lake Nakuru was on 15th June, 1966 while visiting the Lake with Dr. Razoul Schultz from the Sudan. We came upon the Plover running in the car track near the water's edge and, as the bird acted strangely and then performed the typical plover "broken-wing broken-leg" deception tactic, we backed the car and waited. Sure enough, after a few minutes the bird returned to its nest site, scrapped away some pebbles and sat down. We approached the site rapidly and the Plover flew off, revealing the nest which contained two eggs.

These were in a shallow scrape on the bare soil. We took photographs of the exposed eggs and later again when the eggs had been covered and concealed by the bird.

In May, 1969 (CvS/69/4 and 5) two further nests, each strangely enough with c/4, were located. C/4 appears unusual as I have found numerous nests with only c/2.

On 17th July, accompanied by Professor Warren, we visited the Lake and much to our delight discovered yet another nest with two eggs, again in just a shallow scrape in one of the bare areas amongst the Juncus sedge. Later we located a pair with very tiny chicks. The eggs were typical Plover shaped, very pointed, dull greyish with lightly green-tinged background, lightly flecked with a few streaks of brownish-black. These markings were faint and not the usual bold marks of most Plover species. They measured 30 x 20 mm. On 18th July, 1971 we saw many breeding pairs at Lake Magadi with from newly hatched to well feather youngsters.

I have a feeling that the Plover may not be resident on Lake Nakuru throughout the years, as I have made several trips to the Lake with the express object of showing the bird to visitors and failed to find them. The wardens of the park might take an interest in this possibility and keep records!

Mackworth-Praed and Grant (op. cit) state that no calls are recorded. However, these have been recorded by Dr. V.G.L. van Someren in his book "Days with Birds" (1956). The calls are difficult to hear other than the faint 'peeping' of the chicks. The two youngsters at Nakuru were clearly being commanded and reacted to certain calls. The youngsters would suddenly crouch, the parent would move away, stand still, call and the youngsters would immediately follow. We have seen youngsters crouch motionless when approached on foot and have even picked them up while they shammed 'dead', lying limp in the hand!

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947,
KAREN.

REFERENCES

Mackworth-Praed, C.W. & Grant, C.H.B. (1955) Birds of Eastern and North Eastern Africa Vol.II, Longmans.
Williams, J.G. (1967) A Field Guide to the National Parks of East Africa.

FLORA OF TROPICAL EAST AFRICA

During February, 1971 eleven new parts of the Flora of Tropical East Africa were published in London. They are now available in East Africa from the Government Printer, Nairobi. They range in price from Shs. 20/= plus Shs. 2/= postage down to Shs. 5/=, Shs. 3/= to Shs. 2/= with Shs. 1/= to cents 50 postage.

Of the eleven families dealt with, three are Monocotyledons, Flagellariaceae, Juncaginaceae and Dicotyledons, Annonaceae, Cabombaceae, Geraniaceae, Hamamelidaceae, Lecythidaceae, Oxalidaceae, Phytolaccaceae and Plantaginaceae. The six authors of these parts were all on the staff of the East African Herbarium, Nairobi, two of whom, Miss C.H.S. Kabuye and Mr. G.R.W. Sangai are still serving.

As usual, most of the genera dealt with in each of the families are illustrated by excellent line drawings and once one has established to what family a specimen belongs, they should have little difficulty in finding its generie and specific names with the aid of the keys provided in the flora. As usual, generie and specific descriptions are given along with the plants' distribution throughout the area of the flora and a list of herbarium specimens that can be examined at Kew and, not infrequently, in the E.A. Herbarium in Nairobi.

All the authors are to be congratulated on the production of these parts of this Flora, which are obtainable from the Government Printers in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Uganda as well as the Government Bookshops in the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, there are still many more families to be prepared for publication before we even reach the halfway mark, but even a few are better than none at all.

Dr. P.J. Greenway,
P.O. Box 20209,
NAIROBI.

LAKE NAIVASHA & ITS HYBRID FISH

In the Biological Journal of the Linnean Society, 3, 2 pp. 1-146 (1971) there is a very interesting paper "Natural Hybrids of the African cechled fishes *Tilapia spilurus nigra* and *T. leucosticta*: a case of hybrid introgression" by H.Y. Elder, D.J. Garrod and P.J.P. Whitehead.

It commences with an introduction followed by Sites of Hybridization, Parent species, Hybrid characters, Intermediacy, Quantitative Ecology, Sex Ratios, Pond and Laboratory Crosses followed by a Discussion, Acknowledgements and References.

The fish involved are *Tilapia spilurus nigra* and *T. leucosticta* and most of the investigations were undertaken by the authors on Lake Naivasha. There are two plates and ten figures, two of the latter, Fig.2 show surface water levels in Lake Naivasha from 1880 to 1962. Fig.3 is a map of Lake Naivasha, 1958 showing the 1959 level of the Lake and the distribution of the papyrus. Commenting on the distribution of the papyrus the authors say, "Because of the topography, the most extensive papyrus swamps are along the north shore and in the river mouths particularly. The years from 1925 to 1945 must have involved extensive redistribution of the papyrus particularly as the level fell, with drying out around the Lake margins.

The fluctuations since 1945 have been less drastic. Normally much of the papyrus mat floats over a depth of water which varies from several feet down to zero. In a dry year, or period of years, much of the papyrus settles on the bottom. Thus there was probably little water under the marginal papyrus mat in the years 1953 - 1956. By 1959, after three years of rising lake level, there were extensive areas of open water ('lagoons') within the marginal mat and several feet of water under it for much of its area. By mid-1961, after a further three years of falling lake levels, much of the mat had again settled on the bottom and the lagoons had closed in. During late 1961 and early 1962 severe floods raised the level of the Lake by ten feet, floating the mat once more for wind and wave action to break and shear, thus recreating numerous lagoons. Hundreds of acres of reclaimed arable land to the north of the Lake were flooded. As discussed below, these water level fluctuations, in relation to the papyrus swamp, are probably of great importance in facilitating hybridization. Of particular interest are the lagoons, for even when there are several feet of free water under the papyrus mat, fish must be but transient inhabitants since oxygen determinations, by the Winkler method (Elder, unpubl.), showed a zero value for dissolved oxygen under the papyrus. The lagoons, however, with a rich carpet of water weeds, are quite well oxygenated and support fish in numbers."

As a background history of the Lake, I thought the paper very interesting. The authors say the Lake contains a rather strange collection of fish species, mostly introduced, some of which are not even native to Africa and they mention that the Lake dried out completely at least once since the Pleistocene: that there is only one endemic species of fish, the small toothcarp Aplocheilichthys antinorii: they give dates of introduction of various species of fish: that during its turbulent geological history the Lake had much higher levels than those of the present century. They mention that during the period late 1961 and early 1962 severe floods raised the level of the Lake by ten feet. It is a great pity that no serious botanical survey has ever been made on the vegetation of the Lake and that few of its plants are represented by specimens in the East African Herbarium.

Dr. P.J. Greenway,
P.O. Box 20209,
NAIROBI.

DESTRUCTION OF WEAVER COLONIES

If I have "started up a hare", I have done so with good reason and I am happy to know that some folk support my effort to have the status of Weavers and Quelea rationalised. Mrs. Standish-King and Mr. Perez Olindo have made their views known. I feel I should enlarge on this subject and give some indication of how and why the matter arose.

In January, 1970 I commenced a study of the Weavers and allied species with their parasite complex, such as the Cuckoo, Sorella, etc. This study was supported by a permit issued by the Chief Game Warden, Kenya. The area of operation chosen was from the base of the western slopes of the Ngong Hills to (more or less) Magadi. Virtually every weekend a trip was made and the activities of the birds recorded. Of course, particular attention was paid to breeding colonies, the crux of the study.

On 3rd June, we gaily went down the road expecting great things; but alas, we found only chopped down trees. The Weaver colonies along thirty miles of the road had been destroyed; - an estimated three thousand five hundred nests. This was, of course, the ruination of my study. The deplorable destruction of all the young and nests was quite unnecessary.

I had earlier, in duty bound, reported the finding of a colony of nesting Quelea quelea, covering an estimated ten acres of Acacia thicket (ca 125,000 nests). I went to some trouble to provide a report which was accompanied by a detailed 1:50,000 scale plan with route and location of the colony and warned that elephant were resident in the thicket! The Quelea Control team first chopped down the Weaver colonies and only later found the Quelea; but far too late - the young were already out of the nest and flying. However, they went to great lengths, pulling down the evacuated nests and killing a few late youngsters! This destruction of the Weaver colonies was described in an article in the E.A.Standard, where incorrectly captioned photographs were printed. I made representations to the Game Department, Dr. D.R.M. Stewart in particular, and to the Agricultural Department and hoped that action would be taken to prevent such an occurrence in the future. It seems that the article made no impression and no official action was taken.

This year my study continued and all was going well, in fact, excellently. Then the E.A. Standard published an article on Quelea Control and referred to Weavers as "pretty monsters". This was just after an article of mine appeared in this Bulletin (May) in which I mentioned that Weaver nests under study had been destroyed. Mrs. Standish-King, having read this article and that in the E.A. Standard, wrote to the newspaper as "she feared that Weavers could be destroyed along with Quelea." Our Secretary, Miss Allen, also wrote to the Standard deploring the appelation "monsters". I was invited to write a note on Weavers for the magazine "Safari" and this I did. Then on Sunday, 13th June I went off down the Magadi road with Peter Hudson to watch the Weaver colonies; but alas, once again, to our horror, we found all the trees had been felled. That is, all the Acacia, but those nests in the spiky Balanites had been'spared' (sic) - these were too spiky for the Quelea team to tackle!

Too late, I realised that my article for "Safari" had contained a paragraph, "it is to be hoped that the Quelea Control organisation will sheath their pangas and lay aside the axe and cease cutting down trees ..... for the sake of the trees and the birds." On our return in the evening I felt so strongly about this destruction that I wrote to the Minister for Agriculture and sent copies to as many persons as I thought should know about the incidents and hoped that some action might result. Very promptly, the Director of the National Parks, Mr. Perez Olindo, supported the cause and he too wrote to the Minister (see footnote). I felt that a very strong protest should be made as it was more than obvious that the staff of the Quelea Control team were too inadequately informed and instructed to be able to perform their task properly. I telephoned Mr. John Karmali and was told that the subject would be raised at the next monthly meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society. Excellent. I only hope that next year's study will not be brought to an abrupt halt.

With no thanks whatsoever to the Quelea team, their efforts have, nevertheless, made possible some interesting results. We went through every nest we could get at and made counts, etc. and "rescued" all the whole eggs. These have yielded valuable data which would not have been available had they remained in the nests on the trees! All this data will be available sometime in the form of a paper (in preparation), therefore details are not given here; but we did recover a number of nests parasitised by various birds including the Cuckoo Chrysococcyx caprius. These Cuckoos were hanging around the Weaver colonies from the first days of the construction of the nests. The eggs collected will be recorded for the Society's Nest Record Scheme and will eventually be sent to the National Museum.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren.
P.O. Box 24947,
KAREN.

Footnote:

Further letters were written by the Curator of the Department of Ornithology at the National Museum and the President of the Society. The effort seems to have been worthwhile. Dr. van Someren, in a letter dated 10th August, 1971 to the Editor says, "We may get better co-operation in the future."

- Editor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

At about 12.50 p.m. on Saturday, 21st August, 1971 a jet black Caracal appeared at Kilaguni Lodge and walked right across in front of the assembled lunchers and staff.

I don't know how rare these melanistic specimens are, but I should imagine it is a rare sight to see one in broad daylight.

R.M.P. Carne,
P.O. Box 14187,
NAIROBI.

REVIEW

EAGLES by Leslie Brown. (The World of Animals Series)
Arthur Barker & Arco Publishing Co. Inc.
(1970) 96pp., 64 black and white photos,
16 coloured photos, 10 figures etc.
Price £B 1.25.

This book is not to be confused with the same author's book of the same title published in 1955. The present work is intended for a different reader - the keen bird-watcher who is just becoming interested in birds of prey. But this introduction to the eagles will have a wider public, and even the expert can find information here which has not been published elsewhere.

For instance, the table on pages 76-77 summarises the fate of three eagle nests to 1968 and a few notes for 1969; much of this has already been published by Mr. Brown, but the present summary is particularly clear.

The book is divided into seven chapters: 'Define an eagle','Some facts about eagles', 'An eagle's day', 'Eagles as hunters', 'Eagles at home', 'The young eagle', 'Eagles and economics'.

An eagle, as here defined, is "a very large and predatory bird, not a buzzard, kite, hawk, falcon or vulture, to include the near relatives, even though they are much smaller, just as we include the Congo pigmies in the same species as Primo Carnera, the famous boxer". About a quarter of the c.275 species of diurnal birds of prey fit this definition, but the exact total seems in some doubt (58 on p.10, 59 on pp.11 and 15). This is rather a mixed bag taxonomically, and includes 'eagles' whose nearest relatives are not other 'eagles' but vultures, kites and buzzards, etc., as well as 'true' eagles. But most of this heterogenous bunch would indeed conform to Mr. Brown's criteria; personally, I would dispute the inclusion of Gypohierax angolensis the Palm-nut Vulture or so-called Vulturine Fish Eagle.

The eighty photographs are a very important part of this work and account for about half of the pages. They are of varying standards - at least three of those in colour (pp. 8, 50, 51) could just as easily have been in monochrome, even were they to be published at all, and some are nearly identical (i.e. pp. 9 and 35, 16 and 19, 44 and 90, 40 and 68, 70 and 72). A fact that must be obvious to everyone is that at least forty five photographs are of only fourteen African species; and of the nearly sixty species of eagle in the world only twenty five (less than half) are illustrated in the eighty photographs.

We in Africa should not complain but this is, after all, a book on the eagles of the world. Surely some species not shown could have been illustrated, even from captive specimens, as has obviously been done i.e. pp. 7, 10, 15, 16, 17 (and cover), 18, 19, 21, 23, 34, 53, 55. The photographs do show, however, various details of eagle behaviour and from this aspect the species concerned is not important. The preponderance of African examples shows that this continent is better known than the others when it comes to eagles - certainly due largely to Leslie Brown's own efforts, and it is appropriate, therefore, that he does choose African eagles to illustrate his points.

The text is immensely readable and should stimulate many to study eagles. I am certain that Leslie Brown will put many a serious student on the right track; such an enquirer could hardly fail to be infected by Mr. Brown's well-known enthusiasm for eagles and wild country.

A.D. F-W.

IT'S FOR THE BIRDS!

What do you put on your bird-table to attract the birds? This question brings forth such a variety of response that it has given me this idea for a project.

Will members please write and let me know what seeds, fruits and other delicacies they put on their bird-table and what species of birds they attract. The information received could be published in a subsequent issue of the Bulletin and would be of great interest to members. For example, I find that the cheapest food for seed-eating birds is the chicken food known as "cut grain". This is readily and cheaply available from the K.F.A. when there isn't a maize shortage! Information of this nature is published in books and journals in other countries. Can we not do the same for our Society members?

John Karmali,
P.O. Box 2202,
NAIROBI.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 13th September: Tony Deane will give an illustrated talk on "Birds of Lake Nakuru" at the Ford Foundation Hall, National Museum at 5.15 p.m.

Sunday, 26th September: Miss D. Angwin will lead a bird trip to Naivasha. Meet at the Museum at 8.30 a.m. or at the Marina Club at 10.00 a.m. Bring picnic lunches or use the Restaurant there.

Kerio Valley Trip:

Mr. Peter Nares, The Director of the Nairobi Snake Park, and Mr. Mike Clifton, the entomologist of the National Museum will lead an expedition to Sigor in the northern Kerio Valley of Northern Kenya in mid-September. This will be approximately a five-day safari. Members of the Society who wish to go on the safari should be at the Arab duka in Sigor village at midday on Friday, 17th September. Mr. Nares will meet Society members there and will take them to the expedition's campsite at the Wei Wei River, three miles south of Sigor. It is expected the safari will continue to Monday or Tuesday, 20th or 21st.

The purpose of the safari will be to show Society members Black Mambas and other snakes in their natural habitat. The aim will be to capture one or two Black Mambas to enable Society members to see their habitat and see how they are caught. This should make good filming as these snakes are usually caught high in trees. It is hoped to collect other reptiles, such as Monitor Lizards, for the Nairobi Snake Park.

Mr. Clifton will be collecting insects at Sigor for the National Museum collection and will identify any specimens collected by members. It is hoped that there will be at least one ornithologist present to take members bird-watching. Camp will be beside the Wei Wei River, in which it is safe to swim.

Members should take with them four gallons of water and should be completely self-sufficient in food and camping equipment. Members with saloon cars are advised to travel to Sigor via Kitale-Kapenguria-Ortum. The road is rough but passable to saloon vehicles. Petrol is available at Kapenguria and sometimes at Ortum. However, saloon vehicles should carry at least four gallons of spare petrol. Cwners of four-wheel drive vehicles should carry double this amount of spare petrol as there will be a certain amount of driving from the camp site to see snakes being caught.

Members should take anti-malaria tablets a week before going on the safari: (and continue taking them for at least two weeks afterwards! - Ed.)

It is felt that this safari will be of particular interest as the Kerio Valley is a remote, beautiful area - one of the few areas where Black Mambas can be seen with relative ease.

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BULLETIN

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Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

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THE SECOND BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER FOR TANZANIA

After a day of heavy and continuous rain on 2nd August 1971 I found a Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* feeding among a flock of Little Stints *Calidris minuta* on the margins of a pool near Msasani about 10 km north of Dar es Salaam.

The pool is brackish surrounded by soft mud and is a favourite feeding area for large flocks of wading birds. The Broad-billed Sandpiper was feeding among a widely scattered flock of some 100 stints which themselves were new arrivals. The bird was immediately noticeable by its very dark brown upperparts and relatively long, heavy black bill. I was able to drive to within 10 m of it, at which range the decurved tip to the bill and the forked superciliary stripe were well seen. The bird appeared to be an adult still in breeding plumage. In flight it could be picked out with ease; the dark brown mantle showing two buffish longitudinal stripes and contrasting with the pure white belly and rather greyish brown wings. It fed at a slower rate and in a less phrenetic manner than the Little Stints and in flight kept to the edge of the flock of this species.

I did not record the bird on 3rd August and have not seen it since despite my almost daily visits to the pool.

The first Tanzanian record of this species was near Tabora in November 1961 (Reynolds 1965).

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar es Salaam,

Reference

Reynolds, J.F. 1965. On the occurrence of palearctic waders inWestern Tanzania. *E. Afr. Wildl. J.* 3:130-131.

PARTIAL ALBINO STARLING

A partial albino Ruppell's Long-tailed Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis caudatus* is a fairly regular visitor to this farm; it has a white head and tail. The first time it came for about a month in September 1966 and stayed in the cattle yards. It has been seen twice for a few days between September 1966 and July 1970 but then it stayed for about three weeks.

It returned in June 1971 and is still around (at the end of August) - mostly in the fruit garden! Has anyone else seen this distinctive bird? It would be interesting to know how far it travels.

Rose Dyer,
Kisima,
Private Bag, Nanyuki,
Kenya.

BREEDING OF WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATERS *MEROPS ALBICOLLIS*

Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1955) give a rather limited distribution for the White-throated Bee-eater *M. albicollis* but do record a single instance of breeding in May for southern Kenya. The species is obviously a partial migrant locally. Large gatherings, for roosting purposes have been noted and mentioned to me and further records would be welcome.

On the Magadi-Nairobi road at km 89 on the Esonorua flood plain of the Olkeju Ngire, we watched a pair of these bee-eaters hunting dragonflies and calling repeatedly From time to time, one or the other would alight on the ground and apparently disappear. This aroused our interest and so attention was focussed on this spot, a bare patch of earth amongst tufted grass. A bird arrived and swooped to the ground and disappeared down a hole. Inspection revealed the nest entrance which had a small mound of soil in front which screened the bird from view after landing. It was some time before we could examine the nest in detail.

The nest was found on 18th April 1971 and we secured some black and white and coloured photographs of the birds on the following weekend. On 1st May it was decided that, as there was no sign of the birds in the vicinity, we would excavate and examine the nest chamber as we thought the youngsters had left.

A thin stick was inserted and pushed down the entrance tunnel for 36 cm, this gave an indication of depth and direction, so we started to dig a profile alongside and gradually worked downward and inward to the tunnel and chamber. When a depth of 40 cm was reached we broke into the tunnel at the end of the thin stick and were shocked to see a patch of greenish-blue feathers! "Panic Stations", but on reflection the answer was to hand, an old newspaper. After clearing the tunnel of debris the newspaper was carefully placed and the trench refilled. We left in the hope that the parent birds would return. On our return the next day we were relieved to see the parents were there and feeding the young at the entrance. It was obvious from their actions that they were endeavouring to entice the young out but that they were not ready to leave.

While photographing on 24th and 25th April, we had noted that the parent birds went well down the tunnel to feed their young; however by the following week the young were being fed at the entrance. Food consisted mainly of dragonflies with odd grasshoppers; but when the debris from the nest was examined it was found that the young had been given a very varied diet which consisted of bees, wasps and beetles, particularly brightly coloured species such as buprestids. Much of the debris was unidentifiable but there was a wing of a large *Charaxes* butterfly.

The final inspection was made on 8th May and, to our surprise, the nest entrance was closed. Scraping away the soil we found that it had only been used as a short plug. We opened up the trench, recovered the newspaper and while doing so out popped a *Dipodillus* Gerbil. These small Gerbils always close their tunnels when in residence and this one must have taken over the nest or was just sheltering in it.

The nest chamber was finally reached at the end of, and at an angle to the tunnel, 95 cm from the entrance and at a depth of 46 cm, entering at an angle of 25°. The chamber was roughly circular, some 20 cm in diameter and 10 cm from the top to the slightly concave bottom of the nest. The tunnel diameter was 6 cm. There was no nest lining and the floor consisted of thousands of insect fragments.

During several weekends along the Magadi road we found many more pairs of this bee-eater, several of which had sucessfully raised young which were still being fed. (Nest recorded. E.A. Nest Record Scheme).

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

A NEST RECORD OF THE SNOWY-HEADED ROBIN CHAT

On 10th April 1970 a nest of *Cossypha niveicapilla* was found in the centre of a dense thicket near Rapogi, South Nyanza (0.54'S.,34.28'E.). From the Nest Record Scheme (information kindly supplied by Mrs H. Britton) this would appear to be only the second nest record for this species in Kenya; the other by Dr. Fairfax Bell in 1967 records eggs in a nest at Kaimosi but gives no further information.

The nest near Rapogi was cup-shaped and rested in a nook in a tree stump approximately 1 m above the ground. The outside was covered in moss and the inside was lined with fine twigs and rootlets. The nest contained one glossy brown egg and one nestling with a bright yellow gape.

It may also be of interest that in the same and nearby thickets we have recorded *Cossypha polioptera* and *Cossypha heuglini*; also in S. Nyanza, at Tarang'anya (1.14S.,34.36'E.), an adult and juvenile *Cossypha natalensis* were recorded on 24th May 1970.

M. & G. Sugg,
Agoro Sare High School,
P.O. Oyugis, S. Nyanza.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

THE BELLIGERENT SUNBIRD

In March and early April the Kaffir Boom (*Erithrina* sp. but not the local *Erithrina*) in my garden at Kikuyu was bright with flowers.
When the tree started flowering in March several sunbirds visited it as well as the Reichenow's weavers *Ploceus baglafecht* but after about a week we noticed that one male Bronze Sunbird *Nectarinia kilimensis* had taken possession of the tree.

He was there all day and wouldn't allow any other sunbirds or weavers on the tree. He did however permit a White-eyed Slatey Flycatcher *Melaenornis chocolatina* to hawk insects from one of the branches. The The Bronze Sunbird was often so busy chasing others away that he had little time to get the nectar from the flowers himself.

He even drove off the female Bronze Sunbird that I presumed was his mate though towards the end of the time he was in possession of the tree (about three weeks) he did allow her to join him sometimes. He was not afraid of people and we could walk and talk quite close to the tree without disturbing him though he sometimes shouted at us.

The sunbirds that tried to visit the tree were other Bronze Sunbirds, the Variable Sunbird *N. venusta*, the Amethyst Sunbird *N. amethystina* and, two sunbirds I had never seen in the garden before, the Tacazze Sunbird *N. tacazze* and the Eastern Double-collared Sunbird *N. mediocris*.

These last two birds remained in the garden until the middle of July but I have not seen them since.

Barbara Simpson,
Box 99,
Kikuyu, Kenya.

CORRECTION

In my review of Anthony J. Deane's article "Along the Water's Edge" (*EANHS Bull.* 1971 : 80-81) I made the statement that the Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* had never been formally recorded from East Africa, this is incorrect and I would like to apologise to Mr Deane and also to Mr J.G. Williams. Mr Williams recorded the first specimen of this species in 1953, *J.E.Afr.nat.Hist.Soc.* 22(93):17. I must also apologise to Mr Deane for spelling his name incorrectly in the review.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003,
Kabete.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

While I was on leave recently the agency Post Office Kabete was moved from the Kabete Provision Stores to a new building just up the road. The new Post Office is provided with Boxes and my Box Number (for the Bulletin and for Ringing correspondence) is now:

Box 29003,
Kabete, Nairobi,
Kenya.

I still receive mail addressed simply P.O. Kabete but cannot be absolutely sure that all mail so addressed will still be delivered.

To further confuse the issue, the Post Office have found it necessary to add two extra digits to the National Museum's Box Number which now becomes:

Box 40658,
Nairobi,
Kenya

Editor.

SOME INTERESTING KENYA BREEDING RECORDS

A search of the literature has yielded no published Kenya breeding records for the six species in this note. Five are from west of the Rift and one is from the coast.

Scaly-throated Honeyguide *Indicator variegatus*

While making a small collection for the National Museum with Mr & Mrs M. Sugg in South Nyanza, a female with a fully developed oviduct egg was collected on 10th May 1969. The bird was in an area of thickets and long grass by a stream near Sare. Three species of woodpeckers were observed that morning in the immediate vicinity so that it is not unreasonable to suppose that one of these was to be parasitized.

Yellow-throated Leaflove *Chlorocichla flavicollis*

Nests were found in mango trees at Ng'iya in Central Nyanza on 24th April 1969 and 5th April 1970. The first had two eggs and the second two young, probably about 5 days out of the egg. Jackson (1938) gives a good account of breeding in Uganda between April and June and Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1955) give April to August and December. The above two records can be considered as egg-laying in March and April; there is also an EANHS nest record card describing a nest found by H. Williams with two well developed young and an addled egg at Entebbe, Uganda on 13th March 1961, constituting egg-laying in February.

Mackinnon's Shrike *Lanius mackinnoni*

On 28th June 1970 we found a nest with young in a garden in Kakamega Forest. It was some 5m above the ground in a large shrub. An adult was feeding young but it was not possible to ascertain their number or age. This probably represents egg-laying in June. On 27th April 1961, Miss E.J. Blencowe recorded two separate pairs building at the edge of forest at Kaimosi close to Kakamega Forest. One nest was about 2.5m above the ground in a large tree and the other was about 10m above the ground in a clump of bamboo near a river. Dr. Fairfax Bell recorded nestlings at this same locality which hatched on 3rd April 1970 and flew 23 days later. This represents egg-laying in March. The Kaimosi data are on EANHS nest record cards.

Parasitic Weaver *Anomalospiza imberbis*

While making the collection in South Nyanza mentioned above a female with one fully developed oviduct egg and one yolking egg was collected in a shamba near Sare on 11th May. One of us (H.B.) visited Ukwala, Central Nyanza with P.R. Colston and A.D. Forbes-Watson on 19th March 1970 where A.D. F-W found a single nestling of this species in the nest of a Winding Cisticola *Cisticola galactotes*. The young bird was being fed by the cisticola and was about three-quarters grown and practically fully feathered. It weighed 15.7g compared with a mean of 18.8g for six Nyanza adults. It was cryptically coloured above as described by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1955). Egg probably laid in February.

Green-backed Twin-spot *Hypargos nitidula*

While ringing on Leslie Brown's plot at Watamu, Coast Province on 20th August 1970 we netted an incompletely grown juvenile not long out of the nest. It weighed 9.3g with a wing of 50mm compared with 13.6g,54mm for a male and 10.1g, 52mm for a female caught there on 20th and 24th respectively. Probably from an egg laid in July.

Fawn-breasted Waxbill *Estrilda paludicola*
A nest with at least four white eggs was found about 5cm above ground in an overgrown shamba (coarse grass) at Sawagongo, Central Nyanza on 13th February 1970.

Peter & Hazel Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala.

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"BIRDS OF LAKE NAKURU" illustrated talk by TONY DEANE

Mr Deane's talk in the Ford Foundation Hall at the National Museum on 13th September was described by Lise Campbell in her vote of thanks as the most beautiful collection of bird slides members had ever seen and I am sure everyone would agree with her.

Mr Deane took us through the birds of the National Park in systematic order from the grebes to the waxbills and finches although water, and waterside birds rightly received most attention. The quality of the photographs was almost always superb, the exceptions were "record" shots although even these were better than most of us can usually manage! There was not enough time for questions on technique although he did tell us that he used 300mm and 600mm lenses on occasion, and sometimes added a X2 converter - the excellent "record" shot of three Pintail *Anas acuta* having been taken through an effective 1200mm lens. The lesson to be learnt from Mr Deane's pictures is that if you want high quality bird photographs you must have your technique absolutely taped, a firm support for the camera and,possibly most important, plenty of patience.

G.C.B.

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CORRECTION

Miss M.E. Archbold has kindly pointed out two errors in Mrs Robertson's plant list (*Bulletin* August 1971:134-5)

Crossandra subacaulis is in the Acanthaceae not the Scrophulariaceae

Pilea is in the Urticaceae not the Umbelliferae

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Editor.

PAGINATION

Readers will have realised that the September 1971 *Bulletin* was incorrectly page-numbered. We are very sorry about this and the inconvenience it may cause. Enclosed with this issue you will find a new September title page, may we ask you to renumber the actual pages yourselves.

Ed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

ETHIOPIAN SWALLOW *HIRUNDO AETHIOPICA*

In the *Bulletin* March 1971 p.38 the nesting of the Ethiopian Swallow on a coral crag at Diani is recorded. I have a record of its nesting in a very small coral cave south of Mombasa which is of interest because of the unusual date - 30th December 1961. I saw the adult birds and heard the nestlings but the cave was too small to permit entry.

Henry J. Lee,
42, Crofton Road,
Ipswich, Suffolk.

Sir,

BIRDS IN CITRUS TREES

I refer to the note Birds & Citrus, *Bulletin* August 1971 : 137. I have quite a number of Citrus trees in my garden at Korogwe but have not noticed any harmful effects to the birds. Two years ago the Spotted Morning Warbler *Cichladusa guttata* built a nest in an orange tree and brought off two fledglings. One disappeared and the second I rescued from a cat; this bird was recognisable in the garden for a long time and I believe is still there, end of August 1971, as the territory it took still has a bird in it.

A Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* made a nest in the top of a Grapefruit tree but I think did not use it on account of disturbance (we were picking the fruit as it got ripe).

A Rufous-backed Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor nigriceps* had a nest in the "Chenza" tree (Mandarin Orange) last year and there was another unidentified nest in the same tree early this year.

So it looks to me as though birds use the Citrus trees in the same way as other trees when convenient to them. But perhaps other people have experience of a whole orchard instead of my few trees.

Miss M.E. Archbold,
Box 533,
Korogwe, Tanzania.

Sir,

EARLY EUROPEAN BEE-EATERS

Mr L.D.E.F. Vesey-FitzGerald, one of our members, has told me that he heard and saw a party of European Bee-Eaters *Merops apiaster* flying over the Arusha National Park on 14th August this year. Normally this species does not arrive here until October. Is it possible that these were South African bred birds?

John S.S. Beesley,
Box 3134,
Arusha, Tanzania.

Sir,

FRIGATE BIRDS

Late in the afternoon of 30th August, 1971, two Frigate Birds *Fregata* sp. were seen soaring over Ras Iwe Tini between Bamburi Beach and Nyali Beach, north of Mombasa. They soared motionless on long angled wings; one bird had a white breast.

Fleur Ng'weno,
Box 2271,
Nairobi.

There are five species of Frigate Bird in the world: although three species breed on islands in the Indian Ocean only two, the Great *F. minor* and the Lesser *F. ariel* are to be expected off the East African coast. Observers are asked to carefully note the plumage of any Frigate Birds they see since only one example has so far been positively recorded from Kenya: a juvenile male *F. minor* collected by M.W. Ridley on 31st August 1951 at Kipini, (the mouth of the Tana River) now in the National Museum. It is especially important to note the extent of any white areas on the bird and whether there is any colouration (other than black and white) or not.

Ed.

Sir,

BLACK CARACAL

Mr R.M.P. Carne's letter on his sighting of a Black Caracal at Kilaguni in the September *Bulletin* prompts me to recall that on 10th February 1968 whilst driving to the coast about 15km past Mtito Andei, I saw two Africans on the side of the road carrying what appeared to be a small black Leopard with its tail missing. I slowed down for a better look but did not have time to stop. The animal was slung on a stick between the two men, and appeared to have been the victim of a motor-car. The attitude of its bearers did not indicate that it had been poached but more likely that they knew they might get a few "bob" for the skin.

F.J. McCartney,
Fairview Estate,
Box 168, Kiambu,
Kenya.

Sir,

Referring to the letter by R.M.P. Carne in the September *Bulletin* p.155 on the observation of a melanistic caracal at Kilaguni Lodge, may I suggest the possibility that the animal observed was a serval cat rather than a caracal. The two species must be rather difficult to distinguish in melanistic individuals but I have seen serval cats, both normally coloured and melanistic ones, on various occasions in Tsavo Park (mainly East), but only one caracal (normally coloured) so far. It appears that melanistic serval cats are relatively common in Tsavo (by serval standards), while melanistic caracals have not been observed by the Wardens of either Tsavo East or West.

W. Leuthold,
Box 14, Voi.

RINGING NEWS

There are some small corrections to the recovery information printed in this *Bulletin* p.113-4 (July 1971). The Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* J.19219 was actually ringed at Ng'iya (not Lake Uranga) Central Nyanza; the ringers were P.L. Britton & J.F. Harper.

When Dr Gavrilov reported finding the Swallow *Hirundo rustica* J.37100 he used the word "caught", he has since told me that he added Moskwa K-028405 before releasing the bird.

There are some small errors in the co-ordinates given for these three recoveries but these will be corrected in the next Ringing Report.

The Mbarara Syndicate, which at present consists of only Dr Graham Harrington, has had another Swallow recovered, this time in Jugoslavia. The recovery was published in a Croatian magazine and brought to our attention by someone living in Canada! Most other Swallow ringers have had recoveries now but in small numbers compared with those from Mbarara. I appeal to anyone living in Western Uganda who could ring Swallows to contact me.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003,
Kabete.

INDEX TO THE 1970 NEWSLETTER

Dr D.L. Ebbels of Ukiriguru, Mwanza, Tanzania has very nobly compiled an index to the *E.A.N.H.S. Newsletter*, August - December 1970. As Dr Ebbels points out in his covering letter, an index greatly enhances the value of any serial publication and we are very grateful to him.

Stencils are being prepared and it is hoped to issue this index with the November *Bulletin*.

Editor.

RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE

*Christensen, S., Nielsen, B.P., Porter, R.F., & Willis, I. 1971. Flight identification of European raptors. *Br.Birds* 64:247-266.

While in England recently I attended a London Natural History Society meeting where R.F. Porter addressed us on the flight identification of European birds of prey. It was obvious that Porter knew a great deal about his subject but, as often happens, he tried to teach us too much in the time available so that I, for one, came away with the impression that I knew less than when I went in. The answer would have been a series of lectures or, better still, a series of papers which Porter *et al.* have started to write, the first of which has just reached me. The present paper is the first of eight covering European diurnal birds of prey written by two Danes and two Englishmen who have been fascinated by birds of prey and by the identification problems they pose. The paper is very well illustrated by 12 line figures and six plates. Four species are covered, the Buzzard *Buteo buteo* (including *B.b. vulpinus*), the Long-legged Buzzard *B. rufinus*, the Rough-legged Buzzard *B. lagopus* and the Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*. Every future part will contain species which occur in East Africa and will be eagerly awaited although it is likely that it will be a long wait before all appear. The authors make the point that their review will eventually be brought out as a book and they welcome criticisms and suggestions.

G.C.B.

* This paper is NOT available in the Library.

Mann, C.F. 1971. Distributional notes on some Uganda birds. *Bull.Br.Orn.Cl.* 91:111-113.

Clive Mann records the following species from Uganda for the first time: Steppe Eagle *Aquila rapax orientalis*, White-eyed Kestrel *Falco rupicoloides*, Western Red-footed Falcon *F. verspertinus*, Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus*, and the Red-fronted Apalis *Apalis rufifrons*.

G.C.B.

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OUR NAME

Prof. Ernst Schüz, the Director of the Stuttgart Natural History Museum, has written to say that he finds the name of this *Bulletin* rather a mouthfull and suggests that we rename it with a distinctive generic name. There is much to commend this idea: our abbreviation according to World List rules is *E.Afr.nat.Hist.Soc.Bull.*, how much simpler if it were *Nectarinia* (one of Prof. Schüz's suggestions). I raised the matter at the last Committee meeting and it was rejected mainly because a change would be our magazine's third name in just over a year. Readers might like to discuss the point in the Letters column.

Ed.

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MATERIAL FOR THE *BULLETIN*

This issue is rather small and I have used up all the available material; please send contributions direct to me, at Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, as soon as possible.

Ed.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

16th - 20th October, 1971: There will be a four night camp at Kilifi on the coast, over the long weekend. This is being organised by Mrs Mary Buckle, who lives at Kilifi, and also by the Secretary. For further information please write to the Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi.

Monday, 18th October, 1971: Mr Richard Leakey will give a lecture on "Continued Research on Man's origin at East Rudolph" in the Ford Foundation Hall at the National Museum at 5.15 p.m. We hope that you will attend this lecture as Mr Leakey is a very interesting speaker.

Saturday 23rd October, 1971: Miss Allen will lead another bird walk. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m. and bring a picnic tea.

Monday 8th November, 1971: Alec Forbes-Watson will give an illustrated talk on the "Birds of Socotra".

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I should like to remind Nairobi members that Bird Walks are held every Wednesday morning. All are welcome to come and members should meet outside the National Museum, Nairobi at 9 a.m. The walks are usually led by Fleur Ng'weno, Box 2271, Nairobi.

Hon. Asst. Secretary,
Box 4486,
Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN NOVEMBER 1971

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A LAMMERGEYER RECORD

While climbing Mt. Moribos (2314m) in West Pokot District, Kenya on 22nd August this year, my companion and I saw an adult Lammergeyer *Gypaetus barbatus* circling around the rocks. After some searching, the bird was found sitting on a well-used roost on the northwest face of the crag. A large stick nest was visible on the ledge but it was not possible to tell if it was in active use. As far as I am aware, this is one of the known roosting sites of the Lammergeyer in Kenya although birds have been seen flying at a number of places. L.H. & G.H.H. Brown (*Jl. E.afr.nat.Hist Soc.*, January 1963) record the Lammergeyer from Elgon, Suam, Murwanisagar and the Cheranganis, all sites west of the Rift. It is possible that the bird is more common in Kenya than has been previously thought, but it is seldom seen due to the remoteness of its nesting sites.

Also resident on the cliffs at Mt. Moribos are a pair of Verreaux's Eagle, Lanner Falcons, the Egyptian Vulture and Fan-tailed Ravens. Stone Partridges and Greater and Scaly-throated Honey-guides were seen on the mountain slopes. The base of Mt.Moribos is about an hours walk from a point on the Chepararia - Ortum road about 13km beyond Chepararia. The summit, which provides a spectacular view of the Cheranganis and Mt. Seker, can be reached in a stiff climb of another two to three hours.

John Gerhart,
Box 1081,
Nairobi.

THE RING-NECKED PARRAKEET *PSITTACULA KRAMERI*

IN NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK

We should like to record the sighting of four Ring-necked Parrakeets *Psittacula krameri* in Nairobi National Park on 27th June 1971, at about 10.00 a.m. These birds were observed during a routine monthly "Game Count" in a fairly clear area of countryside just southwest of point 26 B. In features the birds appeared identical to the Indian Ring-necked Parrakeet *Psittacula krameri borealis* which is so popular as a cage or aviary bird. All four birds were green with a dark ring round the neck, a red bill and a long tail. We could see no rings or bands on their legs. They were first observed in flight; they flew swiftly into a dead tree but after a few minutes flew off and after circling at some speed returned to the same tree.

There are several subspecies of *Psittacula krameri* including some from Africa. Van Someren (1969) discussed the species and first drew attention to its presence in the Nairobi National Park. He concluded however that those in that locality were "most likely to be escapes, or the progeny of escapes, of imported Indian birds" rather than an African subspecies. The Indian race is already established, following introduction on Zanzibar (Mackworth-Praed & Grant, 1952).

The purpose of this note is to record the continued existence of this species in Nairobi National Park and to ask if other members have seen it in this or other localities?

J.E. Cooper,
C.S. Dewhurst,
A.D. Irvin.
Address of first author: c/o Veterinary Research Laboratory,
P.O. Kabete.

Reference:

Van Someren, G.R.C. 1969, *Bull.Br.Orn.Cl.* 89 (5) 137-139.

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REVIEW

Volume I of Jonathan Kingdon's long awaited EAST AFRICAN MAMMALS - AN ATLAS OF EVOLUTION IN AFRICA, published by the Academic Press, is out at last. The first of three volumes, this book of 446 pages containing over 200 drawings and nearly 100 maps, begins with 98 pages of broad introduction dealing with such important background subjects as the East African topography, climate and vegetation, both past and present; some aspects of evolution and zoogeography and some basic functional anatomy of mammals in general. 230 pages are devoted to primates and 72 pages to the smaller groups: hyraxes, pangolins, ant bear and dugong. There is a gazetteer, a classified bibliography, and a comprehensive index.

Some years ago, when he was embarking on this project, Jonathan told me he was an artist and a naturalist interested in mammals, but not a zoologist. No longer can he say this, as the work contains not only the results of extensive research into the existing literature, but also a great deal of original observation of no small scientific value; his interpretation of the taxonomy and distribution of the many different forms of hyrax, for one instance, is an outstanding contribution in itself. As a zoologist with an artist's eye and with a long experience of watching and sketching his subjects both in the wild and in captivity, it is not surprising that he presents each species as something which is essentially alive, which has a behaviour and ecology, and which has, indeed, a specific personality. This refreshingly unusual viewpoint has resulted in an absorbingly readable text.

Jonathan's outstanding artistic ability can be proved by a glance at any of the drawings, which are superb in every respect. The account of each species is accompanied by a large and detailed pencil drawing, and in these we see again the author's ability to present a "living" animal; how often does one see a drawing or painting of an animal which

really looks alive and full of vitality? These drawings seem to be accurate to the finest detail as, with the National Museum of Kenya mammal collection at my disposal, I have yet to catch him out.
Also accompanying each species is a page full of sketches depicting the various movements and attitudes adopted by the animals; there are also numerous drawings, sketches, diagrams and six colour plates illustrating particularly interesting aspects of behaviour and anatomy where these crop up.

As is to be expected from the Academic Press the book is beautifully produced, but, also to be expected, it is not cheap and will be selling for about Shs.270/- in Nairobi. No naturalist, however, nor anyone else connected with East Africa's wildlife, can afford to be without this magnificent and monumental work. When all three volumes are out the layman will at long last be in the happy position of being able to identify any East African mammal, and there are more than 360 species, as well as gaining a considerable insight into its habits and evolutionary background.

A. D-M.

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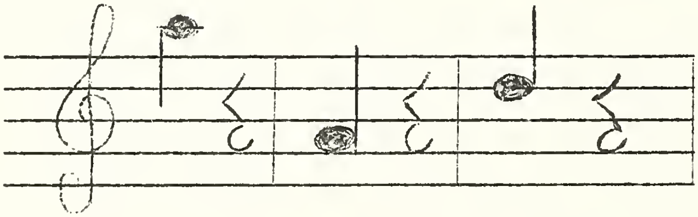
CALL OF THE CHIN-SPOT PUFF-BACK FLYCATCHER

BATIS MOLITOR

The Chin-spot Puff-back Flycatcher is a common but unobstrusive little bird in gardens here and usually one is aware of its presence only from its characteristic call. This ia a gentle whistle of three notes, the first two descending in scale and the last one higher than the second.

This call is not mentioned by Williams (1963, A Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern and Central Africa), while Mackworth-Praed & Grant describe a call "of three notes on a descending scale". The call does not seem to fit the conventional eight note scale exactly, so cannot easily be written. I am grateful to my wife for the following approximation.



D.L. Ebbels,
Ukiriguru,
Box 1433, Mwanza.
Tanzania.

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A BREEDING RECORD OF THE BLACK-WINGED STILT IN COASTAL TANZANIA

Mackworth-Praed & Grant consider the Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* to be a scarce breeding bird in East Africa, apparently restricted to the Rift Valley Lakes. The following record of confirmed breeding on a coastal pool near Dar es Salaam in Tanzania may therefore be of interest.

The pool is in an area of low sandy flats about half a kilometre inland from the coastal sand bar and is near Msasani village some 10 km north of central Dar es Salaam. In natural circumstances such an area would be subject to incursions of seawater at springtides and would probably support a growth of mangroves. However, because of nearby salt works and the proximity of settlement and associated shambas, the incursions of the sea are artificially directed and the pool only contains salt water through seepage. Most of the water comes from rainfall and is therefore only slightly brackish, with a salt content of 6.5 parts per thousand.

Although rain can fall at any time along the coast most falls from March to May. During these months the pool is at its greatest extent, covering an area of about one hectare to a maximum depth of one metre. After May the pool gradually dries up until by the end of September it is about a tenth of its maximum size.

The area round the pool comprises sandy flats with a sparse, low growth of halophytic plants. Most of the mangroves have now been destroyed but there is one small patch of them in one corner of the pool. It is only among these remnant mangroves that any cover is provided, and that only in the form of dead stumps and branches and young suckers. The rest of the pool is completely open and is a favoured feeding ground for waders throughout the year. During the months of May to September 1971 I visited the pool on forty two occasions. The first Black-winged Stilts (two) were seen on 6th June by 22nd of that month the numbers had built up to six pairs, each pair feeding separately. It was on this day that I found the first nest. It was built up of dead vegetation and mud above the water and contained four eggs. The nest was completely surrounded by water up to 20cm.deep and at least 15m from the nearest mangrove cover.

On 3rd July the eggs hatched and for the next two weeks the young fed within 20m of the nest which was apparently still used for roosting. The parent birds were very noisy in defence of their young, attempting to drive off other waders, Indian House Crows *Corvus splendens*, and humans. It is interesting that when a party of Indian House Crows flew over the feeding young the parents never chased them far but returned quickly to their young which usually scurried into the base of the mangroves and crouched flat among the suckers. Incidentally, Hollam (1962) gives the incubation period of the Black-winged Stilt as 25-26 days in Europe. This suggests that this pair had built their nest and begun incubeting very soon after they first arrived at the pool. I ringed all four young on 18th July when their quills were showing.

During August the young although still kepping within a loose family group were feeding all over the pool and mixing with other stilts and waders. In early August one was seen to flutter a short distance. In mid September only three young, now fully capable of flight, could be found.

Although the numbers of Black-winged Stilts on the pool had built up to twenty by mid July only one other oair attempted breeding, its nest containing four eggs was found on 6th July. It was more substantial than the first nest, containing more mud and situated on mangrove suckers at the base of a mangrove about 15m from the first nest site. The eggs hatched on 2nd August and on 7th August four small young were feeding well out on the open mud with one parent. This brood was much harried by Indian House Crows which sat in the mangroves waiting for an opportunity to drop on the young. The parents were, in their desperation, inclined to chase individual crows too far leaving their brood open to attack from other crows. By 10th August only one young bird could be found and by the 12th the whole brood had disappeared.

By the middle of August most of the non-breeding stilts were feeding in a loose flock although still in pairs. During September the numbers gradually declined until on 27th only three individuals (including two immatures) were seen.

Photographs of the nests, eggs and young are with the National Museum, Nairobi and nest record cards have been completed.

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar es Salaam.

Reference:

Hollom, P.A.D. 1962 (3rd edition) The Popular Handbook of British Birds, Witherby, London.

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REVIEW

A CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF ETHIOPIA Emil K. Urban & Leslie H. Brown 1971. pp. 143. Frontispiece. Published by Haile Sellassie 1 University Press, Addis Ababa.* Obtainable by Registered Airmail to East Africa for £2.85 Sterling direct from the press. First edition 2000 copies.

Those who have already seen Urban's "Bibliography of the Avifauna of Ethiopia" (1970) will realise that that publication was but a forerunner of the present work. The serious student of Ethiopian ornithology (in its wider as well as in the more limited "Abyssinian" sense) would be well advised to use both in conjunction, as the two volumes are complementary, and the scholarly "Bibliography" is really part and parcel of the "Checklist".

The introductory matter (pp. 7-21) explains the country, the natural regions and habitats, which gives the stranger to Ethiopia a very good idea of the faunistics and peculiarities of the land. Particularly interesting is the "Summary of Data" (pp. 16-21), where it can be seen that no less than 23 full species are endemic - the degree of ornithological knowledge of these in life is indicated by the fact that no less than 12 species have never had the nest and eggs described.

It is all the more commendable, therefore, that the authors have amassed so much information on the 827 species currently recognised as occurring in Ethiopia.

This knowledge has been presented in the now familiar shorthand of modern African checklists. The abbreviations are listed at the begining of the "Annotated list of Species" (pp. 22-115). Speaking personally, I find this rather difficult reading, but cannot complain, as hieroglyphics in my own notes are even less comprehensible! At any rate, these short-cuts are a great saving in space, and consequently in production costs.

Each species on the list is given the scientific and English names and the Praed & Grant reference number(s). If the generic and/or specific treatment differs from that work the unfortunate phrase "synonymous with . . ." follows - unfortunate, because this is putting the cart before the horse. If there is more than one subspecies in the area each is recorded under such categories as status (refer to pp. 9-10), geographical distribution (pp. 10-12), abundance, habitat (pp. 12-13) and breeding (pp. 13-15) with references to the latter. An asterisk indicates that a skin is represented in the collection of the University's Museum. Particularly valuable are the Remarks following some species, which very often indicate particular lines of investigation in which the amateur can help. Selected references, a gazetteer of localities, changes in nomenclature and English name and scientific name indexes complete the volume.

The authors follow White's (1960-1965) classification which means that this work is in line with modern East African thinking. The changes in nomenclature (Appendix B p.120) have already been incorporated into the text, although the authors claim to have included only data known to them up to the end of May 1970, and Hall & Moreau's "Atlas" was only available to them in October. The only disparity is that they prefer to follow White over *Mirafra africana /hypermetra.* To my way of thinking this would add an extra species to their list.

I consider the black and white frontispiece of the head of the Thick-billed Raven *Corvus crassirostris* an unnecessary luxury - otherwise production can hardly be faulted. It must provide a stimulus to both resident and visiting ornithologists, and a spur to neighbouring countries to equal this original contribution to Ethiopian (in both senses of the word) ornithology. It is a must for any bird-minded visitor to the country.

A.D. F-W.

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*Box 1176, Adis Ababa, Ehtiopia.

CAMP ON THE WEI WEI RIVER

The Society's camp to the Wei Wei River near Sigor, West Pokot District, NW Kenya, was one of the most interesting we have had as all spheres of natural history were covered. Nearly 40 members camped on the edge of the river which rises in the Cherangani Hills and was very cool and refreshing to swim in after a hot day in the bush. Most of the members camped under the big fruiting fig trees which were visited by large numbers of bats and the people who slept out were liberally decorated in the morning! The weather was kind to us, except for one sharp downpour which hit us the second night in camp.

Peter Nares, the leader of the trip, was kept very busy as reports on snakes poured in from all over the area. It was thrilling to watch Mr Nares, helped by his assistants and Bob Ashe catching Black Mambas *Dendroaspis polylepis*, all of which were in trees. During the three days at the camp site, members of the expedition were able to see three adults of this highly venomous snake being caught. This made for good photography and it was of interest to see the habitat of this rarely seen species.

Other reptiles collected on the trip included one Green Snake *Philothamnus semivariegatus*, two Stripe-bellied Sand Snake *Psammophis subtaeniatus*, three Boomslangs *Dispholidus typus*, one Blind Snake *Typhlops* sp., and seven Nile and Savannah Monitor Lizards *Varanus niloticus* and *V. exanthematicus*, all of these are now on display in the Snake Park at the Museum.

Insects were plentiful, and Mike Clifton made a representative collection for the National Museum of about 150 different species. These ranged from the beautiful chestnut-brown and white *Charaxes varanes* to a tiny metallic emerald green Buprestid beetle. A short way from the camp were two trees which attracted seven different species of *Charaxes* butterflies, and many others as well, all of which proved difficult to catch! Two uncommon species of Cetonid beetle were found on the hibiscus bushes around the camp.

We were lucky to have Mrs Tweedie, the botanist from Kitale, on the camp and her time was spent collecting the plants of the area, which are being sent to Kew. We had all noticed "her" Aloe *Aloe tweediae*, by the roadside from Moropus, down the Marich Pass, to the floor of the Rift. She collected 30 specimens and was able to draw three, among them were several species of *Coleus* and *Plectranthus*, rather succulent and scrambling in the thorny thicket. One of these had been specially requested by Kew.

For the ornithologists, the area was productive, but as it was dry there was very little nesting. Eighty five species were recorded, the most notable being a small flock of Curly-crested Helmet Shrikes *Prionops plumata* which visited the fig trees every day; a Narina's Trogon *Apaloderma narina* in the camp, and Black-headed Gonoleks *Laniarius barbarus* were much in evidence. A Little Weaver *Ploceus luteolus* had a tiny nest and was feeding young. Rüppell's Long-tailed

Starlings *Lamprotornis caudatus* were common and the dawn chorus included Spotted Morning Warblers *Cichladusa guttata* and the White-browed Robin Chat *Cossypha heuglini* which made waking up a joy. The finale was a White-crested Turaco *Tauraco leucolophus* seen at the top of the Marich Pass.

Apart from holed petrol tanks, broken sumps, faulty starters and mashed exhaust pipes the journey home (500km) was uneventful! Maybe this would be the right point to remind members that the Society does not accept any responsibility for any damage done to vehicles or people on their trips. We must thank Mr Nares for arranging this trip to a very scenic and little known part of Kenya. Reference lists of reptiles, plants, insects and birds for the area will be in the National Museum Library, Nairobi.

Dennie Angwin,
Box 72833,
Nairobi.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

BATE, R.H. 1970, A new species of *Hemicypris* (Ostracoda) from the ancient beach sediments of Lake Rudolph, Kenya. *Palaeontology* 13:289.

BROWN, L.H. 1971, The relations of the Crowned Eagle, *Stephanoaetus coronatus* and some of its prey animals. *Ibis* 113:240.

---------- & ROOT, A. 1971, The breeding behaviour of the Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor*. *Ibis* 113:147.

DUNCAN, P & WRANGHAM, R.W. 1971, On the ecology and distribution of subterranean insectivores in Kenya. *J.Zool.Lond.* 164:149.

GWYNNE, M.D. *et al.* 1969-71, The South Turkana expedition. Scientific papers 1 - 4 *Geogrl. J.* 135-137.

----------------- 1969, Bibliography of Turkana (cyclostyled).

HILL, J.E. & MORRIS, P. 1971, Bats from Ethiopia collected by the Great Abbai expedition. *Bull.Brit.Mus.Zool.* 21, No.2.

HVIDBERG -HANSEN, H & de VOS, A. 1971, Reproduction, population and herd structures of two Thomson's gazelle populations. *Mammalia* 35:1.

JARVIS, J.U.M. & SALE, J.B. 1971, Burrowing and burrow patterns of East African mole-rats *Tachyoryctes*, *Heliophobius* and *Heterocephalus*. *J.Zool. Lond.* 163:451.

KEITH, S., BENSON, C.W. & IRWIN, M.P.S. 1970, The genus *Sarothura* (Aves, Rallidae). *Bull.Am.Mus.nat.Hist.* 143, art.1.

KHAMALA, C.P.M. & KETTLE, D.S. 1971, the *Cuclicoides* Latreille (Diptera:Ceratopogonidae) of East Africa. *Trans.R.ent.Soc.Lond.* 123:1.

LAWS, R.M. 1971. The Tsavo elephants. *Oryx* 11:32.

Continued on page 189.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY

I have just received an invitation to join this newly formed Society and I suspect that many, if not all, members of the E.A.N.H.S. will have received an invitation too.

I find it distressing that yet another Society is formed when its functions and intended activities surely overlap those of our Society.

It is only in recent years that the Society changed the title of its Journal to include the "National Museum"; are we now to have two Museum Journals? The dissemination of information regarding the activities of the Museum could equally well have been published in the *Bulletin*, similarly dates of demonstrations, lectures and displays.

I feel that this is duplication of activities and it appears to me that members of the new Society will, for a large part, be drawn from members of the E.A.N.H.S., so why another Society? Would it not have been better to have some "Harambee". Can we have some more information please, to indicate where the difference lies between the functions of the two Societies.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen.

Sir,

QUELEAS

One aspect of the Quelea question that nobody seems to have considered is that they are very good to eat. Jackson (Birds of Kenya Colony & Uganda Protectorate, 1938, p.1444) writes - "It was there (Ndi), on one occasion, that my dinner depended on my gun; but as neither Guinea-fowls nor Francolins could be found, a single charge of No.10 shot into the brown as they rose accounted for no less than seventy-two of the Diochs. The couple of dozen served up that night were excellent, and the rest my boys and gun-bearers ate, no doubt with equal relish". What he does not tell us is how they were prepared; but no doubt any Belgian cook could inform us.

In a recent journal which I cannot at the moment trace I read a horrifying account of the wholesale slaughter of migrant warblers in Belgium - for the table! Perhaps the Belgian people could be weaned onto Queleas, frozen or tinned, and these badly behaved birds used to relieve the pressure on innocent species.

There is a pathetic account in *Tanzania Notes & Records* No.67 of the plight of some of the people of central Tanzania who seem to be on more or less permanent famine relief largely owing to the destruction of their crops by Quelea. A local canning factory established there would be a great boon to the people and lead to the *harvesting* rather than the extermination of Quelea. Of course some way of killing them would have to be devised other than poison; but spraying the neighbourhood with dangerous poisons is in any case not considered wise in these days. Each consignment would be guaranteed pure Queleas only with no admixture of weavers, cuckoos or other such trash.

In other parts, the hunting type of tourist might be encouraged, Dachshunds trained as Retrievers, and much harmless sport enjoyed.

I hope these suggestions will be favourably received.

P.M. Allen,
Box 4486,
Nairobi.

Sir,

CHESTNUT-BANDED PLOVER AT BARINGO

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren's note "On the nesting of the "Chestnut-banded" or "Magadi Plover" *Charadrius pallidus venustus* Fischer & Reichenow, at Lake Nakuru" (*E.A.N.H.S. Bull.* 1971 : 147) has prompted me to recall that I have seen this species at Lake Baringo. The occasion being, I think, between June and September, 1969 in the area of Salabani on the south-west corner of the lake.

I took a few black and white photographs of this bird that are now in London together with some notes which likely record the exact date. However, should anybody be sufficiently interested, in what may be the first record for this plover at Lake Baringo, I am willing to have the material sent here and to make it available.

Malcolm Ellis,
c/o Tim Barnley,
Box 332,
Kitale, Kenya.

Sir,

RED-WING STARLINGS AND KLIPSPRINGERS

On 3rd October 1971 close to the Rifle Range, behind the Ngong Hills, Kenya, Mrs Jean Hayes, Miss Allen, M.P. Clifton and I saw a very interesting association between a pair of Red-wing Starlings *Onycognathus morio* and a Klipspringer *Oreotragus oreotragus*.

We were driving down towards the Rifle Range and watching the cliffs on our right when a pair of Red-wing Starlings were spotted in flight. We stopped and saw the birds land close to a Klipspringer which was lying on a rock in the shade. One male starling then settled on the animal and started to pick something off its back (ticks?). After a short while the female bird joined him and hopped up the Klipspringer's neck and was investigating its ears very thoroughly. The animal, which was a pregnant female, put her head down and allowed the bird to continue its search. It was obvious from the animal's reaction that she was used to the starlings, and that this presumed de-infestation was a regular occurence.

We watched, fascinated, for about ten minutes until the birds flew off. Returning to the place a quarter of an hour later the Klipspringer had been joined by a male, but the birds were not in sight.

I can find no record of this behaviour and any further observations would be most interesting.

Dennie Angwin,
Box 4486,
Nairobi.

Sir,

The Botanist in Charge of the East African Herbarium has asked me to send you a complete list of corrections for Mrs Robertson's check list of plants published in the August, 1971 issue of this *Bulletin*. The writer wishes to point out that neither he nor Dr.Greenway nor anyone else at the East African Herbarium ever received a list of plant names for correction before the list was published. Miss Archbold has already indicated two of the glaring errors in the plant list in the October, 1971 *Bulletin*.

A complete list of the correct names and families for the plants in Mrs Robertson's list follows. Those names marked with an asterisk (*) did not require any changes in spelling, authorities or family names:

Pavetta teitana K.Sch. (Rubiaceae)
Tacazzea apiculata Oliv. (Asclepiadaceae)
Crossandra subacaulis C.B.Cl. (Acanthaceae)
*_Cissus quadrangularis_ L. (Vitaceae)
Tarenna graveolens (S.Moore) Brem. (Rubiaceae)
Psychotria riparia (K.Sch. & K.Krause) Petit (Rubiaceae)
Hippocratea africana (Willd.) Loes. (Celastraceae)
*_Euclea divinorum_ Hiern (Ebenaceae)
Cassipourea malosana (Bak.) Alston (Rhizophoraceae)
*_Impatiens nana_ Engl. & Warb. (Balsaminaceae)
Triumfetta macrophylla K.Sch. (Tiliaceae)
Tabernaemontana sp. (not _Conopharyngia_ sp.) (Apocynaceae)
Rytigynia schumannii Robyns (Rubiaceae)
Sparmannia ricinocarpa (Eckl. & Zeyh.) O.Ktze. (Tiliaceae)
Cyathula schimperana Moq. (Amaranthaceae)
Pilea sp. (Urticaceae)
Conyza schimperi A.Rich. (Compositae)
Faurea saligna Harv. (Proteaceae)

Gnidia subcordata Meisn. (Thymelaeaceae)
**Tephrosia holstii* Taub. (Papilionaceae)
**Triumfetta rhomboidea* Jacq. (Tiliaceae)
Lysimachia volkensii Engl. (Primulaceae)
Cassia kirkii Oliv. var. *kirkii* (Caesalpiniaceae)
C. hildebrandtii Vatke (Caesalpiniaceae)

The East African Herbarium is quite willing to name plant collections from individuals as well as from institutions and government agencies provided that the specimens are properly collected. Notes on techniques of plant collecting, pressing, drying, etc., are available from the Botanist in Charge, East African Herbarium, P.O. Box 45166, Nairobi. The Herbarium will also undertake the checking of plant names intended for publication.

R.B. Faden,
Box 45166,
Nairobi.

Sir,

ON THE NAME OF THE *BULLETIN*

I agree with Prof. Ernst Schuz that our present name is rather lengthy, and I think a further change desirable. However, since we are a natural history society, and not an ornithological one, I feel we should consider the possibility of other names as well as those of birds, although *Lophaetus* would be a natural suggestion considering our emblem.

Amongst the larger mammals we have, as far as I know, only one endemic species, Abbot's Duiker *Cephalophus spadix*, and a near-endemic Hunter's Hartebeeste *Damaliscus hunteri*. Whilst the former is not suitable, the latter has another, rather pleasant-sounding common name Hirola - which I suggest as a possibility.

Considering endemics, we have one endemic genus amongst the birds, following modern classification - *Histurgops* - which to my ears is rather ugly.

Our initials - E.A.N.H.S. do not lend themselves well to anagrams, as I have just proved to myself.

Perhaps others with a different bias in natural history to myself could suggest names from other faunal groups as well as flora.

Clive.F. Mann,
Box 337,
Kapsabet, Kenya.

Sir,

We might change the name of our Bulletin; but we could not possibly discard the beautiful badge specially designed for us by Rena Fennessy.

The name, therefore could not be *Nectarinia* but would necessarily have to be *Lophoaëtus*, which some members might find a worse tongue-twister than *E.Afr.nat.Hist.Soc.Bull.* even if we adopted the later spelling *Lophaetus* (leaving out the o and the diaeresis).

P.M. Allen,
Box 4486,
Nairobi.

Sir,

MARABOU STORKS MARKED IN UGANDA

It is worthwhile drawing the attention of members to a request for information on Marabou Storks recently marked in Uganda, which appeared in the Zambia Ornithological Society Newsletter of August 1971. These were marked by Dr. D.E. Pomeroy of Makerere University, Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda, mainly in Queen Elizabeth National Park. Bill-tags were used - yellow, green or white in Q.E.N.P. (*c.*120 birds), and black in Kampala (*c.*20 birds). The tags can easily be seen with binoculars at a range of 30 - 40m. The following information is required on any marked bird:

Date
Time
Locality (including district, country etc. if away from a large town)
Habitat
Colour of tag
Number of tag (if visible - not essential, except in S.W. Uganda)
Number of Marabou in vicinity (i.e. size of flock)

Peter L. Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala.

Sir,

THE IDENTIFICATION OF FRIGATE BIRDS

In your comment on the identification of frigate birds in the last issue (*antea* p.168), you give the impression that they are not difficult to identify if sufficient notes are taken. We would like to point out that they are extremely difficult, especially immatures, even with complete descriptions and coloured photographs. During late December 1969 and early January 1970 two immature frigate birds were seen almost daily by the writers at Malindi. They were observed at close range and colour slides were taken. About a year later R. Sternstedt (*in litt.*) saw one in a slightly different plumage at Tanga. A slide and full descriptions have been sent to four authorities on sea birds and so far no agreement has been reached. It has even been suggested that they may be *Fregata andrewsi*, known only from Christmas Island and the Cocos Keeling Islands in the

East Indies. There are two earlier records of unidentified frigate birds near Malindi (Jackson 1938; Stoneham 1944, *Jl.E.Afr.nat.Hist.Soc.* XVII (79 & 80):395).

It seems that frigate birds may be regular in small numbers on the East African coast, and we would urge anyone who observes one in the future to take very careful, detailed notes and, if possible, photos in the hope that it may be identified. Anyone finding one dead should if possible deliver the body or skin to the National Museum, and if not possible, should take measurements (i.e. lengths of wing, bill and tarsus) as well as detailed description. One of us (P.L.B.) found a bleached skull on the beach near Kiunga (Kenya) recently but no effort has yet been made to have it identified.

We are still trying to get our birds identified, and if successful will publish a note at a later date.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337, Kapsabet.

Peter L. Britton,
Yala.

Although I may have given the impression that frigate birds are easy to identify (provided that notes are taken at the time) this was not intended. My purpose in drawing attention to the need for detailed notes was that some casual birdwatchers might think that "Frigate Bird" is a species - a reasonable enough mistake since this family is not treated in Williams' two field Guides nor in Peterson's European Field Guide. Alexander (Birds of the Ocean, 2nd edition, 1955 London, Putnam) states that immatures of *F. minor* and *F. andrewsi* are indistinguishable but it may be that authorities nowadays have detected differences between them.

Ed.

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REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

On and around 29th September, 1971 (a neap tide) a number of the blue and silver planktonic nudibranch *Glaucus atlanticus* were washed up on the beaches of Oyster Bay, north of Dar es Salaam. Also present were other such typical inhabitants of the open seas as the siphonophore *Physalia* and the mesogastropod *Ianthina*.

I would like to know the extent of this stranding up and down the coast of East Africa; can anyone who noticed the phenomenon get in touch with me please.

D.M. Pearson,
Department of Zoology,
University of Dar es Salaam,
Box 35064,
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITES *ELANUS RIOCOURII* IN THE KEDONG VALLEY

Recent information indicates that there may be an anomalous population of Swallow-tailed Kites in the Rift Valley between Mts. Longonot and Suswa. We now have continuous records of their presence for eleven consecutive months in 1970/71. We would be very grateful indeed for any information on the presence of this species in the Rift Valley south of Longonot prior to 1970. We are preparing a formal record of ou obser observations and would like to make it as complete as possible.

Those members of the Society who might like to see Swallow-tailed Kites have a good chance of doing so along the Kijabe-Narok road where it passes through Akira Ranch and the neighbouring Masai land contiguous to and to the west and south of the ranch.

Information on earlier records should be sent to I.C.S. Parker.

L. Blankenship, C.R. Field & I.C.S. Parker,
Box 30678,
Nairobi.

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A RECORD WAGTAIL CATCH

In the *E.A.N.H.S. Newsletter* 1970 p.19, I related how four of us ringed 568 Yellow Wagtails *Motacilla flava* in one day (in November 1968); the total of all species ringed on that day was 569. Four days before the "569 Day" the same team (helped half-time by Lise Campbell) had ringed a total of 588 birds of which 584 were Palearctic migrants but including only 562 Yellow Wagtails.

In late October this year, again at Kariobangi, Nairobi, David Pearson, Nina Pettitt, my wife and I had another busy day with the Wagtails. This time our total ringed was 592 birds including 585 Yellow Wagtails. We would like to claim some provisional records (Guinness Book of Records please note).

1. Highest number of birds ringed in Kenya in a day - - (592)
2. " " " " " " E.A. " " " - - "
3. " " " Yellow Wagtails ringed in the world in a day - - (585)
4. " " " " ringed in kenya in a day- - "
5. " " " " ringed in E.A. in a day- - "

6. Highest number of Palearctic migrants ringed in Kenya in a day - - (586)

7. " " " " " ringed in E.A. in a day - - "

Prospective record-beaters watch out, we are confident that the next record submitted for ratification will be in four figures.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003,
Kabete.

Did someone say the *Bulletin* was getting too scientific?

Ed.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

FOR SALE

Jackson : Birds of Kenya Colony & the Uganda Protectorate.
3 vols. £95.

Grandidier & Newton : four volumes on birds from the Histoire naturelle et politique du Madagascar.
4 vols. £115.

A.F. Morrison, Box 47652, Nairobi. Telephone 27531 (office),
24626 (house).

200 - 400mm Zoom "TAMRON" TELEPHOTO LENS *f*6.3, Manual Diaphragm. Built-in Lens Hood. u/v Filter. Minimum focus 12 ft. Will fit most good cameras. shs.700/- o.n.o.

V.R. Simpson, Box 25, Maseno, Kenya.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 8th November: Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson, the Ornithologist at the National Museum, will give an illustrated lecture on the "Birds of Socotra". National Museum Hall - 5.15 p.m.

Saturday, 13th November: Mrs Daphne Curtis of Limuru has kindly agreed to lead us on a bird walk in her garden. Please meet at the Museum, and the party will leave at 2.30 p.m. prompt. Mrs Curtis will provide tea for members. Remember, it may be cold towards evening.

Wednesday morning bird walks will continue to meet at the National Museum at 9.00 a.m.

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NEW MEMBERS - OCTOBER

Your Committee feels that it would be a good idea to start listing new members in the *Bulletin*, by doing this you may be able to make useful contacts.

Full Members:

Mr R. Brouwer, Box 30554, Nairobi.
Mr U. Gullberg, Box 30362, Nairobi.
Mr. F.G. Hay, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Dr P.G. Holland, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mrs C. Kamau, Box 30046, Nairobi.
Mrs C. Mohr, Box 30576, Nairobi.
Mr R. Stanek, Box 30518, Nairobi.
Major R.F. Tyers, Box 79, Nakuru.
Baroness R. Wedell, Box 912, Nakuru.

Junior Members:

Sajjad Butt, Box 40904, Nairobi.
Ned Mohr, Box 30576, Nairobi.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

IMPORTANT

WOULD ALL CONTRIBUTORS PLEASE NOTE THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE TO USE MY BOX NUMBER, WHICH IS:-

Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Continued from page 180:

MERRETT, N.R. 1971, Aspects of the biology of Billfish (Istiophoidae) from the equatorial western Indian Ocean. *J.Zool.Lond.* 163:351.
OLIVER, D.R. 1971, Life history of the Chironomidae. *A.Rev.Ent.* 16:211.
PARKER, I.S.C. 1971, An observation of mass mortality of Nile Perch (*Lates* sp.) on Lake Albert, Uganda. *E.Afr.agric.J.* 36:419.
REARSON, D.J. 1971, Weights of some Palearctic migrants in southern Uganda. *Ibis* 113:173.
SMITH, K.D. 1971, Notes on *Oenanthe* species in winter in Africa. *Bird Study* 18:71.
TURNER, D.A. & GERHART, J. "Foot-wetting" by incubating African Skimmers. *Rynchops flavirostris*. *Ibis* 113:224.
VERDCOURT, B. 1971, Notes on East African Annonaceae. *Kew Bull.* 25:1.
---------- - 1971, Studies in the Leguminosae - Papilionoideae for the "Flora of tropical East Africa." *Kew Bull.* 25:65.
ZIEGLER, A.P. 1971, Habitat and breeding of the Grey-headed Oliveback *Nesocharis capistrata*, in northern Uganda. *Ibis* 113:238.

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JUN 14 1972
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E A N H S

B U L L E T I N

Editor: P.O. Kabete, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 4486 Nairobi, Kenya.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN DECEMBER 1971

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FISHES OF THE KENYA REEF - IV

In the first three notes of this series, 26 families were chosen for brief description on the basis of their being well represented in genera or species or both; abundant enough to be common, and thus frequently seen by casual gogglers; and possessing fairly charateristic basic shape patterns. In this note a further seven families are described, and these conclude the brief introductions to the greater proportion of the commonly encountered families of the inshore areas of the reef and the lagoon.

27. SERRANIDAE, the rock cods, have, with few exceptions, a remarkably constant basic shape pattern; also a high proportion of the species are spotted in one way or another, ranging from small speckling to large spots and, in one species, a honeycomb pattern. The first dorsal is strongly and sharply spined, the number of spines being useful for determining the species of some genera. The scales are usually small and ctenoid (see illustration); the mouth is large with well developed teeth. The smaller species and juveniles of the large ones are to be found haunting rocks and rock debris in the lagoon. They are among the finest of eating fish.

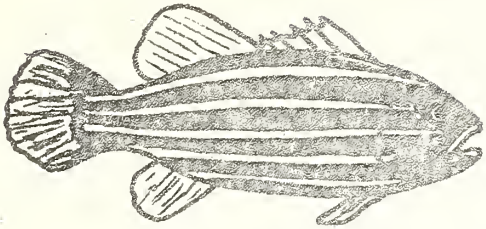
    Included in this family are the famous Watamu Marine National Park *Tewa*; the species is *Pomicrops lanceolatus*, the grouper (or garrupa). The largest of the Watamu Tewa are estimated to be at least 250kg; Smith records them as attaining lengths of more than 4m. One of the smallest of the rock cods, *Grammistes sexlineatus* (up to 25cm), is commonly found hiding under cover of rocky overhangs or in crevices. They are brown or black with horizontal yellowish stripes; the species is heavily coated with slime. The common genus seen in the lagoon is *Epinephelus*, and there are probably at least 16 species in our area. It seems likely that East Africa is one of the centres of speciation of the Serranidae.

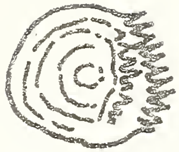
28. GATERINIDAE, the gaterins, are typically fishes of the reef; at least one species, *Gaterin orientalis* (40cm), yellow with dark horizontal bars, shoals in relatively large numbers. While their body shape is fairly distinctive, the species are not always easy to identify and there are great differences between juvenile and adult forms. At Diani, *G. flavomaculatus* (60cm, with distinctive red spots over its body) is frequently seen in the lagoon. The lips of gaterins become distinctively enlarged and thickened as the fish matures.

29. SIGANIDAE, the rabbitfish, are characterised by their extremely spiny dorsal and anal fins, and the forward-projecting spine in front of the first dorsal. Pricks from the spines are painful but not dangerous, and the pain soon passes. Rabbitfish are grazers. They are the *Tafi* of our waters, and all of them are

SERRANIDAE

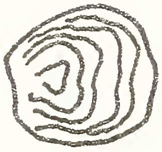
1 *Grammistes*





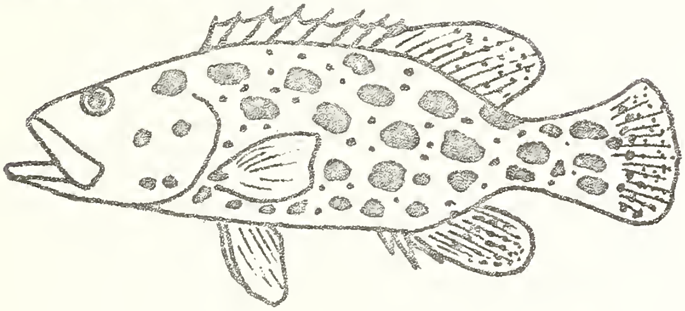
Ctenoid

SCALES



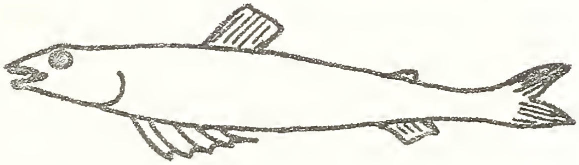
Cycloid

2 *Epinephelus*

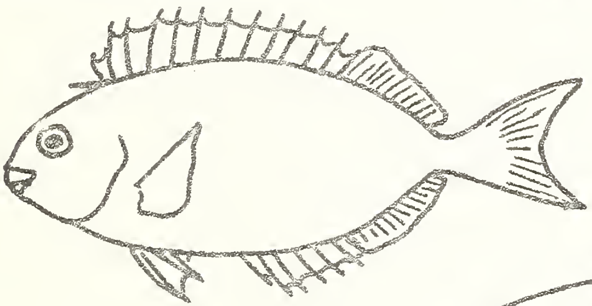


SYNODONTIDAE

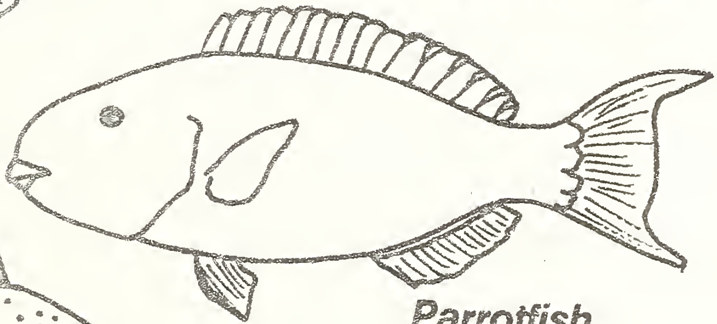
Lizardfish



SIGANIDAE Rabbitfish

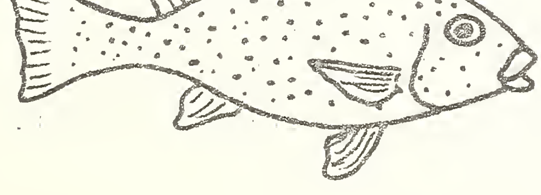


CALLYODONTIDAE



Parrotfish

GATERINIDAE



good eating. *Siganus oramin* (18cm) brownish and blotched, is frequently seen; *S. rivulatus* (23cm) is easily recognised by the curious black patterns on the light coloured body.

30. SCORPAENIDAE are known as scorpion, lion or turkey fish; I prefer the first common name as it at least has the advantage of a direct relationship to the family name. The species with much enlarged pectoral fins are well-known attractive inhabitants of the reef and of suitable habitats of the lagoon. They are found under coral or old eroded coral overhangs; they spend most of the daylight hours suspended, almost motionless, upside down under a rocky ledge. Young scorpion fish are often extremely abundant around fish traps. Their general red colouration would hint that they are active nocturnal predators.

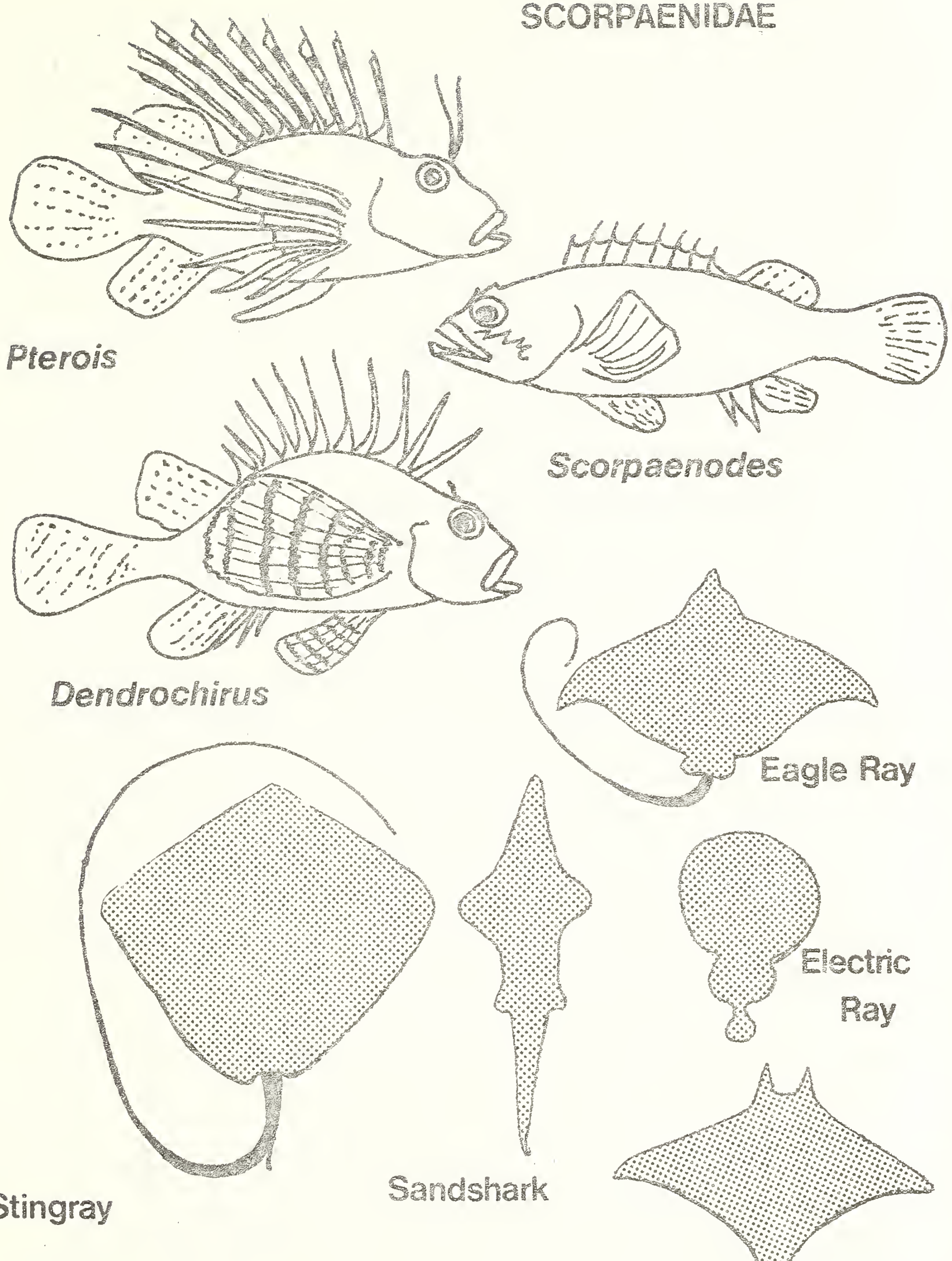
Scorpion fish are rightly treated with the greatest respect, by gogglers and fishermen alike, because of the danger of stabs or pricks from the dorsal spines. Such stabs are agonising, and, if deep, can be dangerous. The scorpion fish apparently do not possess true poison glands, but the spines are coated with an extremely toxic mucus. Fortunately, they are a shy, wary and retiring family and we have never yet experienced any aggression whatsoever on their part, they are content with an occasional rearing of the spines. Local fishermen catch larger specimens in times of shortage of fish; the flesh is stated to be delicate and wholesome.

Their method of feeding in aquaria is interesting. When a scorpion fish sights a amall shoal of fish, it first swims nonchalently in their direction. At an appropriate moment in space and time, the large pectorals are extended and the small fish are expertly herded into a corner, where, trapped between the corner of the aquarium and the pectorals, they are delicately snapped up, rapidly and one at a time, into the large mouth.

The family is well represented in genera and species along our reef; Smith lists 34 species occuring in the Seychelles. We have encountered 5 species at Diani. Only 3 genera have the large dorsal and pectorals: *Pterois* and *Pteropterus* have simple pectoral rays, the upper ends being free of connective membrane; *Dendrochirus* has somewhat smaller pectorals which have some divided rays, none being free of the connecting membrane. The remaining genera (such as *Scorpenodes*) have pectorals only slightly larger than normal, and the dorsal spines, while pronounced, are set in a convential type dorsal fin. They are unmistakeable as scorpionfish, though, and possess the characteristic ridged and spiny gill covers.

31. CALLYODONTIDAE, the parrotfish, are so well known as hardly to merit description. They belong, with the rainbowfish or wrasses, to the Order Pharyngognathi, or pharynx-jaws, an apt name because the united pharyngeal teeth are used for crushing coral and

SCORPAENIDAE



Pterois

Scorpaenodes

Dendrochirus

Eagle Ray

Stingray

Sandshark

Electric Ray

Manta Ray

shellfish, their principle dietary items. The teeth are fused to form the distinctive parrot-like beak; the last line of scales on the tail is enlarged. They are mostly brilliantly coloured fish, but, in general, difficult to identify, unless freshly caught specimens are examined: determination to species level is frequently dependant on colouration, and this fades and changes with death. *Callyodon* is the common genus.

32. SYNODONTIDAE, the lizardfish. I have included this family not becuase it is in any way remarkable, but because the lizardfish are extremely common inquisitive small fish always seen lying on sandy areas of the lagoon. They are cylindrical in shape, averaging about 15cm; The common species *synodus* are light brown to pale buff, variously speckled and mottled. The large dorsal has a very characteristic shape, and the head is remarkably lizard-like.

33. DASYATIDAE, the stingrays. While these notes purport to deal with the bony inshore fish, rays are common enough in sandy areas of the lagoon to warrant their inclusion. In these cartilaginous fish, the pectoral fins are enormously developed and are fused along the side of the head, giving to the order its outstanding characteristic. There are five main groups of rays, the sand-sharks, eagle rays, stingrays, manta rays, and electric rays. I have illustrated the basic shape patterns of all 5 groups, even though only the stingrays *Dasyatis* are likely to be seen in the lagoon. Stingrays have a characteristic lozenge shape. They possess a grooved serrated spine, with associated poison glands, at the base of the tail. The venom is powerful and for this reason any ray should be treated with the greatest respect. Their movements through the water are, however, worthy of study as they are among the most elegant of swimmers.

Ken Bock,
E.A.A.F.R.O. (Muguga),
Box 30148, Nairobi.

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ON THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ANTELOPES AND BABOONS

Various antelopes such as impala, bushbuck, etc., are often observed in the company of baboons and one wonders what the benefits, if any, of this association might be. An obvious possible explanation is the advantage gained in the detection of potential dangers, if two animal species relying partly on different sensory mechanisms cooperate. Another possibility was pointed out by Morgan-Davies (1960): impala gather under trees in which baboons are feeding and consume fruits dropped by the baboons that would otherwise be unavailable to them. The foolowing observation illustrates this point.

On 12th October 1971, at about 08.00, my wife and I saw a mixed assemblage of animals in a plain next to the Voi River in Tsavo National Park (East). It consisted of a troop of baboons, about a dozen impala, a male and two female waterbuck and a male lesser kudu. Most of them were under a large fig tree (probably *Ficus sycomorus* L.) with ripe fruit. Some baboons were feeding in the tree, dropping quite a few "figs" that were eagerly sought and eaten by all three species of antelope below. Lesser Kudu are known to eat various kinds of fruit (Leuthold, 1971); impala may also do so, but for waterbuck this kind of food is likely to be somewhat unusual.

In this instance, the antelopes clearly benefited from the activity of the baboons which, themselves, did not appear to derive any advantage from the "association" with the ungulates. From the point of view of enemy detection, it is interesting to note that the baboons were, in fact, the first to flee when we approached a bit in the car. Most of the antelopes, on the other hand, continued to search for fallen "figs" for a while and later moved off slowly, feeding on shrubs, etc., as they went. They thus showed no obvious response to the baboons' disappearance.

Walter Leuthold,
Tsavo Research Project,
Box 14, Voi.

REFERENCES:

Leuthold, W. (1971) Studies on the food habits of lesser kudu in Tsavo National Park, Kenya. *E.Afr.Wildl.J.* 9.

Morgan-Davies, A.M. (1960) The association between impala and olive baboons. *Jl E.Afr.nat.Hist.Soc.* 23:297-298.

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THE OCCURENCE OF THE WHISKERED TERN IN UGANDA

For a few days in mid-September 1966, I watched an unusual tern feeding with a small party of early White-winged Black Terns *Sterna leucoptera*, at Awoja near Soroti, Uganda. I decided that it was a Whiskered Tern *S. hybrida*. Amongst the features noted that clearly seperated it from its companions was its heavier appearance, combined with less black on the head. On various other points I was able to eliminate all other species of tern.

The nominate subspecies is known as a passage migrant to Kenya, whereas *delalandi* breeds in Tanzania and other countries to the south. As it was accompanied by other Palearctic terns, and as the nominate subspecies is known from Moyen Congo and Kivu (White 1965), I think it was likely to have been *S.h. hybrida*.

This would appear to be the first record of the species for Uganda.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337, Kapsabrt.

REFERENCE:

White, C.M.N. (1965) A Revised Checklist of African Non-Passerine Birds. Lusaka. Govt.Printer.

CAMP AT THE COAST 16th - 20th OCTOBER 1971

From 16th to 20th October Mr and Mrs Buckle had kindly invited members of the Society to camp on their plot, or nearby, at Kilifi in order to study birds and natural history of the surrounding area of the coast, and if possible, to see the Carmine Bee-eaters *Merops nubicus* which flock in to roost at night on an island in Kilifi Creek.

The Bee-eaters proved to be the most exciting and spectacular experience of the whole trip. Mr Buckle had provided a large boat and we sailed over to the tiny island, which supports a few mangrove trees. The protruding rocks are covered with sharp oysters so the tide has to be at its highest in order to get near the island without danger to the boat. At about 5.45 p.m., just before sunset, the first bee-eaters appeared high high in the sky making their characteristic double note call. At first the early comers flew high, occasionally swooping down over the trees. All the time newcomers joined in doing spectacular aerobatics, congregating in dense flocks, almost settling on the island, but as if it was yet a little early they flew high into the sky again their colours showing up beautifully as they twisted and turned in the sun. More birds flew in the whole time and as far as one could see with binoculars the birds kept appearing until the whole sky was full of birds. Then suddenly, as the sun went down, they all swooped into the trees with an audible "swoosh" of thousands of wings. They all took off once more before returning and settling for the night. Lots of bickering and swopping of places went on and the whole time more flocks were coming out of the brilliant sunset sky to join in on what seemed to be already full trees. The bright reds, dark blues and torquoise of these beautiful birds really showed up in the rays of the setting sun. This surely must be one of the wonders of the world. These bee-eaters nest in colonies in a belt across Africa from Nigeria through Sudan to Ethiopia and Somalia, and come to East Africa in the non-breeding season. In Kenya they seem to prefer the coastal regions,

Also roosting on the small island were large flocks of Whimbrels *Numenius phaeopus*, Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopica* and Cattle Egrets *Ardeola ibis* as well as doves, Darters *Anhinga rufa* and smaller waders.

During the trip we also made excursions to the beautiful Sokoke forest and Jilore plantations and picknicked on the banks of the Galana River. Game tracks and spoor were numerous in the forest, especially those of elephant although none were seen. On a later camping trip to the forest we noticed that the very rich bird life is only evident before 8.30 a.m. and after 4.45 p.m., but as if to make up for the dull period during the heat of the day, the forest becomes alive with rare and beautiful birds in the morning and the evening.

We made visits to Mida Creek which was alive with waders; even a small flock of Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber* was seen as well as Crab Plovers *Dromas ardeola* Curlews *Numenius arquata* and all the various sandpipers and plovers which frequent the coast at this time of year.

We visited Gedi, where the party saw the Yellow-rumped Elephant Shrew *Rhynchocyon chrysopygus*, the rare Spotted Ground Thrush *Turdus fischeri* and Peter's Twin-spot *Hypargos niveoguttus*.

We are very grateful indeed to Mr and Mrs Buckle for their hospitality and for giving us this opportunity to visit this interesting area of the coast and seeing the Carmine Bee-eaters - a "must" for any birdwatcher. It is a pity that so few members were able to take advantage of this opportunity.

A full list of birds identified during the excursion to the various areas is available from the writer.

Lise Campbell,
Box 14469,
Nairobi.

BIRDS IN THE RAIN

I got the idea of writing about this on 14th October last when we had a heavy shower of rain at breakfast time. During the very dry conditions of the last few weeks one of the *Cassia nodosa* trees has shed many of its leaves, starting from the top and leaving a lot of bare branches sticking out. As soon as the rain started our local population of Swallows *Hirundo smithii* and *H. abyssinica* collected up and sat on the top of these bare branches. There must have been about thirty birds; they proceeded to take a bath in the rain, fluttering and preening just as tha other birds do in the bird-bath.

I have seen the migrating birds doing very much the same thing, sitting on the electricity wires in the rain when passing through here in early March. These were European Swallows *Hirundo rustica* and Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* which came here one year when we had some good thunderstorms.

At the end of the dry season, or after anylong dry period, we sometimes get the phenomenon of rain falling from a cloud but evaporating before it reaches the ground. When this happens, the Swifts (we have both *Apus affinus* and *A caffer* nesting on the church) fly up screaming, and circle under and up into the cloud. It is my belief that what they are doing is getting a bath in the falling rain. The Swifts are recognisable by their voices, but I rather think the Swallows may do the same.

One very hot afternoon in March this year the garden was full of twittering birds, spending their time in and out of the bird-bath, Sparrows, Weavers, Waxbills, Mannikins and Bulbuls. Then we had a shower of very large, sparse drops of rain; all the birds immediately moved out to the tips of the branches of the trees and bushes which came alive with birds fluttering and preening with an action that was almost a dance. It was a very amusing sight.

Another thing I have seen is birds bathing by flopping about on the leaves of trees after rain. A favourite tree seems to be the *Cassia nodosa* with its compound leaves on flattish branches. Bulbuls *Pycnonotus barbatus* often do this although they bath frequently in the bird-bath as well.

Sunbirds almost never come to the bird-bath, but I have seen them several times flopping about on the Cassias. These are usually *Nectarinia senegalensis* and sometimes *N. venusta* as far as I can see, the trees being very tall. Some years ago I lived near a wild Cassia, *Cassia afrofistula* I think, and every year about December some big Greenbuls came to eat the fruits. I identified these as *Chlorocichla flaviventris*, though it is difficult to be sure about Greenbuls. They ate the seeds out of the long hanging pods when they were mature but not yet turned brown. They also bathed by this method of using the rainwater on the leaves. On the other hand I have not seen any of the Sparrows, Weavers, Bishops and so on doing it.

I would be very interested to know whether other observers have seen this kind of behaviour in other species which I do not have the opportunity to see; and whether other species of trees are used as "bath trees".

Mary E. Archbold,
Box 533,
Korogwe, Tanzania.

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NOTES FROM KAREN

QUELEA FOR THE TABLE, Cott and Benson record a rating for palatibility of 6.2 out of 9 by a tasting panel in Zambia: "The palatibility of birds mainly based upon the observations of a tasting panel in Zambia". H.B. Cott and C.W. Benson, (1970) *Ostrich* Sup.8:357-384. In the Sudan, Blue Nile Province Sennar area, Quelea are Killed by Nomad Arabs and Falata children with a type of boomerang, for food. We have found Mousebird *Colius striatus* good eating, roast or in a pie but Benson rates *C. indica* at only 6.2! On collecting trips, many years ago, we always sampled some of our specimens. Parrots are excellent but Hornbills - terrible!

GOSHAWK AND SANDPIPER. My son was wandering around our dam early last month, when suddenly a Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro* flashed down onto a Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos* which he had disturbed. The Sandpiper just dived into the water, swam for a distance apparently submerged, and reappeared to fly off while the hawk made a clean miss!

RING-NECKED PARRAKEET *Psittacula krameri*. This is most interesting as it is in the same locality in which I found them breeding, section 25A and B., feeding on figs.

FRIGATE BIRDS, We have a record of two, unidentified, Frigate birds seen off Watamu in January 1968.

CHARAXES BUTTERFLIES. I draw attention to an important new paper by Dr A. Rydon, onetime M.O.H. Mombasa. *Entomologists Record* 1971. Vol.85 pp.219-233. "The Systematics of the Charaxidae (Lepideptera : Nymphaloidea). Rydon places that very odd species *Palla ussheri* in a new subfamily Pallinae and removes it from Charaxinae within the Family Charaxidae. A revision of the whole of the Charaxinae has now been completed by Dr V.G.L. van Someren and parts I - VI are available, published by The British Museum (Natural

History). All species are illustrated together with races; some new species and many races and forms are described and illustrated.

BEE AND BIRD. Even a bee can make a mistake while hunting by sight, based on colour. A Carpenter Bee *Xylocopa flavorufa* went to a yellow "Day-lily" by the bird-bath and having finished taking nectar, proceeded to investigate the orange-yellow head of a surprised Holub's Weaver *Ploceus xanthops* that was waiting its turn for a drink. The bird nearly fell from its perch. This incident supports the theory that colour is important.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen.

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RING-NECKED PARRAKEET *PSITTACULA KRAMERI*

On the evening of 1st April 1970, five parrakeets flew over our garden in Ndorobo Road, situated approximately 1.5km from the Nairobi National Park (Banda Gate).

These were certainly Ring-necked Parrakeets, a species with which I am familiar in Ceylon. Their calls, whilst flying over, were typical of the Rose-ringed Parrakeet *Psittacula krameri manillensis* a common parrot of the low-country areas of Ceylon, which is noisy when flighting to its roost.

If only four individuals were sighted on 27th June 1971, fourteen months after my sighting, it appears that this tiny colony is not breeding, in fact it has lost one member.

I was not able to obtain a detailed view of the colour pattern as they passed over our house but, from the description given of all four having a dark ring around the neck it would appear that they are all males as, the female lacks the black and rose-pink neck ring.

Ted Norris,
Box 42406,
Nairobi.

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A PETREL AT LAKE RUDOLF KENYA

On 18th August 1971, sailing in a fishing boat near the eastern shore of Lake Rudolf (Latitude 3.20'N.), I saw a small brown gull-like bird with a conspicuous white rump, it was about the size of a Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos*. This bird flew alongside the boat for a few minutes and I had a good look at it. It was unlike any of the small waders which are common in East Africa during the European winter, and with its trailing feet it looked remarkably like the illustrations of Petrels. I have, however, not been able to find any reference to sightings of Petrels in East Africa, except one washed up on the coast (Parsons 1969). It would be interesting to hear if other members have sighted these birds in East Africa, and in case the identification is petrel, which one. This was a single bird and the flight did not suggest a Pratincole with which the colouration could be confused, furthermore these birds usually appear in flocks.

Lise Campbell,
Box 14469,
Nairobi.

REFERENCE:

Parsons, B.T. (1969) *Bull.Br.Orn.Club.* 89:120

There seems little doubt that Mrs Campbell's bird was indeed a Petrel although the specific identity remains unknown. Oceanic birds, such as Petrels and Auks (Alcidae), are frequently encountered inland in Europe and North America following gales at sea; the same thing must happen in Africa but, because of the paucity of observers it will be seldom noticed. It may be worth mentioning that a male Dusky Little Shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri* was found dead at the foot of the Limuru T.V. mast on 18th Oct. 1963. (Africana 1(8) :26 and R.C. Murphy *in litt.* to G.C.B. 22.8.69.).

Ed.

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PROPOSALS FOR AN ANNUAL EAST AFRICAN BIRD REPORT

A short time ago I contacted a number of ornithologists in East Africa and others outside who have interests in this area, and suggested the institution of an annual East African bird report. I received enthusiastic replies from most of them, with offers of assistance and advice and would now like to put my modified proposals to the E.A.N.H.S. members.

The purpose of this report, which will be submitted annually as a paper for publication by the Society, is to bring our knowledge of the distribution, breeding, abundance and movements of birds in our area up to date. A number of people make observations on birds but do not gather enough material to warrant publication of a paper. It is hoped that observers will take advantage of the opportunity to submit these for publication in the report and thus make these potentially useful observations available to the public. A lot of ornithological papers pertaining to East Africa have been published in recent years in foreign journals, many of which are not of easy access. Interesting records will be abstracted from these papers.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT:

The records included will fall roughly into the following categories -

1. Vagrants: species which have only been recorded on a few occasions before, or perhaps not at all, in the area covered by the report, but not including those in (2).
2. Extensions of known range: considerable extensions of the known ranges of species since the publication of Mackworth-Praed & Grant, including a number of species then unknown in East Africa, will be included in the report.

3. Interesting breeding records will be extracted from the Nest Record Scheme.

4. Migration: (a) Local Birds - it is hoped that a clearer picture of migration within Africa will emerge from the collation of records. Many of us have noticed that some species are present in an area at some times of the year but are absent at other times; but whether they are local wanderers or long distance travellers is far from clear. To help clarify this by collating records from the whole of East Africa will be one of the aims of the report. (b) Palearctic Birds - results from ringing are published annually in the Bird Ringing Report. However, interesting records, such as visible movement or large concentrations of migrants will be published in the Bird Report.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT:

The species will be arranged in one systematic list. Space permitting, a bibliography of all recent literature pertaining to East Africa will be included.

The Report will not in any way attempt to replace the Society's *Bulletin* or the Nest Record Scheme Report. Rarities, observations on behaviour etc. etc., will continue to appear in the former while Mrs H.A. Britton will continue to make her annual reports, but material may be extracted from these where relevant.

A "committee" of interested ornithologists will decide on the contents, but will *NOT* be the counterpart of the "Ten Rare Men" in Britain, since all rarities will be published with full supporting details (unless these have been previously published) thus making such a body superfluous.

I am prepared to act as general collator, and John Beesley has agreed to deal with records from Northern Tanzania. The first report, which, hopefully will go to press in early 1973, will probably contain records going back perhaps ten years or more, but subsequent ones should have more of an annual bias once the backlog has been cleared. It is hoped that as many members as possible will assist in submitting records for the report, and at a later date I shall publish lists of species for which we particularly require information in the *Bulletin*.

I shall be out of the country from December through March and hope to start receiving records on my return to Kenya.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337,
Kapsabet.

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REHABILITATED FISH EAGLE

An adult Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer* which has received treatment for an injured wing and feet has been released in Central Kenya. The bird has been ringed with coloured rings and if seen or found members are asked to contact J.E. Cooper, c/o Vet Lab, Kabete or the Editor.

Ed.

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NEST RECORD SCHEME - RECORDS FOR 1971

Will contributors please send in their breeding records for this year as soon as possible after 31st December.

Last year there was a considerable delay, and it was impossible to make a report before June. I have already received records from many keen members, so that by the end of October we had more than 500 cards for 1971. I am looking forward to producing a real progress report early next year. Please help by sending your records promptly.

Hazel Britton,
Nest record Scheme,
Box 1102, Kisumu.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

AN AFRICAN SAND MARTIN ON THE DRY FLY

Those of your less earnest readers, who also read books about trout fishing, will be familiar with the often repeated story about the dry-fly fisherman who caught a Swallow instead of a trout. A similar experiemce happened to the writer recently.

In the gathering dusk on 5th June 1971, I was fishing a small black "nymph" on the "Canal Reach" of the Southern Mathioya river when the fly was taken by an African Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola* low over the water surface. It was quickly landed, but took a long time to release kindly.

W.G. Dyson,
E.A.A.F.R.O., Muguga,
Box 30148, Nairobi.

Sir,

Whilst netting in Kakamega Forest with friends on 9th October 1971, I caught two birds that were later identified as White-tailed Ant-thrushes *Neocossyphus poensis*. However, whilst the white tail markings are a distinctive feature there are others I would like to record as they are not mentioned in Praed & Grant or Chapin (Birds of the Belgian Congo, 3, New York 1953). Firstly there is a rust wing bar about 1cm in width passing approximately midway across all secondaries and primaries except the first. The ends of the feathers distal to the bar are also distinctly darker brown than the proximal half. Secondly, both birds had a bare patch of dark brown skin behind the eye, above the ear covert. Although both birds were in moult there were no feather follicles showing in this skin and I am reasonably certain that it is a permanent feature. Thirdly, there are prominent 'bristles' radiating from the base of the bill and pointing downwards. The feet were flesh coloured and the iris dark red-brown.

Finally, I would like to make a suggestion which will no doubt be regarded as heresy by the "establishment". It is that skins should be dried with one wing extended. The excuse that it would not be practical because of extra storage space required is not, in my opinion, valid. After all, if space and not accurate recording is to be the criterion for a skin collection we might as well only keep half the skin!

V.R. Simpson,
Box 25,
Maseno, via Kisumu.

Sir,

I have received much pleasure in receiving the *Bulletin* for the past year or so and would like to contribute some records which I think are rather interesting.

I notice in the November issue, an article on Ring-necked Parrakeet *Psittacula krameri* in the Nairobi National Park. Interestingly enough I saw a pair of them at Shelly Beach south of Mombasa on 24th August of this year. I was rather surprised to find them there. They were flying in a swift direct line just back of the hotel buildings going south giving a very sharp, graty call as they went, about 3 - 4m off the ground.

Now I would like some help on two birds I have seen within the last three weeks. The first was seen in the Mpanga Forest near Fort Portal, Western Uganda, with a mixed bird party in the upper foliage. It appeared to be about the size of a negro-finch or a small weaver and was busy moving through the leaves for food. It appeared to be sooty black all over, but when it moved its head a yellow collar was visible. I have seen the Yellow-mantled Weaver *Ploceus tricolor* on several occasions but it didn't appear to be this species.

The other bird was seen near the forestry station at Ruhiija in the Impenetrable Forest, also W. Uganda. It was along the path which leads to the research plots to the south-west. It was in a tall tree moving about the foliage like a tit. Fortunately the tree was below us so we were looking almost straight across at eye level. To me it looked like the Oregon Junco *Junco oreganus* which I have seen in southern Ontario, Canada, in the winter. It looked like a smallish waxbill and my first reaction was that it might be a White-collared Oliveback *Nesocharis ansorgei* but the colour seemed highly unlikely. It had a sooty black head and throat but did not appear to have a collar. Its mantle, rump and tail appeared to be grey. The bill was black. The bird was alone. If someone could help me with this bird I would be very grateful. I dont think I was dreaming at this point even though it was the morning after we had seen 91 species in the forest!

The other interesting observation I would like to mention took place on Sunday, 3rd October at Kaazi on the eastern side of the Entebbe Peninsula about 15km from Kampala. We were hoping to go out on the lake that morning at 6 a.m. but the outboard motor would not work. About 7.45 a.m. I noticed one or two Steppe Buzzards *Buteo buteo vulpinus* winging their way towards us going from east to west over the channel of water that goes to Port Bell.

Within 15 minutes there were about 25 overhead, circling about; they appeared to glide quickly over the water and then when they were over land they tended to rise a bit and begin circling. We were there until 10 a.m. and they continued to come across the channel in small numbers, circle overhead and then disappear to the west. We then drove about 15km south on the Entebbe Peninsula to Lutembe Beach, but there were no buzzards about. We returned to Kaazi at about 12.45 and the Steppe Buzzards were coming fast and furious. The sky was full of them; they were following the same pattern, gliding quickly across the channel and then circling and soaring over the land. They came at all heights from tree level upwards to almost out of sight. The only other bird that was soaring with them for a time was a Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer*.

Between 1 and 3 p.m. I saw well over 2000 birds, they were strung out along the shore like ducks and geese migrating in flocks. They were very difficult to count but by taking certain sections and multiplying it was possible to estimate about 600 overhead at a time. Every twenty minutes or so their numbers would thin out and they seemed to move westward. Then more and more would come in over the channel. At about 3 p.m. a big thunderstorm appeared on the scene and that seemed to end the migration for the day. I have observed such hawk migrations along the northern shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario in Southern Ontario in the autumn, but never dreamt of seeing such a sight in East Africa. Presumably this migration went on from 7.45 a.m. until 3 p.m. and there may have been upwards of 5000 birds during that period. They also seemed to be following a very narrow corridor; as I mentioned earlier, there were none flying over 10 - 16km south of Kaazi and just a few km north in Kampala very few were seen.

Rev. Peter Hamel,
Bishop Tucker College,
Box 4, Mukono, Uganda.

Sir,

NEW NAMES FOR THE BULLETIN AND A PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP LIST

I agree with the Committee that another change of name for the *Bulletin* would be undesirable. Apart from the confusion caused by a second change of name in a short space of time, there would inevitably be disagreement over a suitable single name (of mammal, bird, fish or fungus). It seems most inappropriate for a journal devoted to natural history as a whole to bear the name of any single group of organisms. It might also invite unfavourable comparison with journals of quite different purpose and outlook such as *Ibis*, *Auk*, *Oryx*, etc. The *Bulletin* admirably fills the need in East Africa for publication of the shorter, topical or less scientific (but none the less interesting) notes on natural history, Society functions and reviews: it should not become a second Journal. Personally, I dont find the present full title of the *Bulletin* too cumbersome. The *Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum* seems much more of a mouthful and it is also a scientific journal comparable with others bearing single word titles. It would be much more logical (but, I believe, just as undesirable) to change the name of the *Journal* rather than that of the *Bulletin*.

I think that publishing the names of new members in the *Bulletin* is a good idea. To take it a stage further, I suggest the publication of a complete membership list at regular intervals of, say, two years, beginning now. Most Societies publish membership lists, which greatly encourage friendly contact and co-operation between members. With this aim, it might be useful to indicate each member's particular interests, for example, (field botany), (birds & reptiles), (Lepidoptera), or (general) for those with very wide interests. The only E.A.N.H.S. membership list I have seen is limited to Tanzania only and is now very much out of date.

D.L. Ebbels,
Box 1433,
Mwanza, Tanzania.

Sir,

AN ENCOUNTER WITH A MASAI STARLING

Leaving Athi River township at about 4 p.m. one saturday recently, I saw a Masai Starling with an injured wing trying its level best to fly to an Acacia tree by the roadside. Just flying overhead was another starling, apparently the injured bird's mate; swooping down every now and then and just flying past the injured bird.

I stopped the car, picked up the bird, intending to put it at a safe distance from the road, but as soon as I picked it up its mate swooped down and started pecking at my head. It just took a short flight in a circle and came swooping down at me ferociously.

This reaction induced me to try an experiment. I got into the car with the bird and closed the window, however this did not in any way deter the mate and it kept up its volley of attacks, just as ferociously, by pecking at the pane. After it had made five or six futile attempts, I lowered the window and as soon as I did this the bird moved in on me again and pecked my head three or four times before darting out again. I got out of the car to release the bird at a safe distance and by the time I did this I had been attacked four or five times.

The fact that there were three other people in the car and a few bystanders did not frighten the bird and it seemed not to take any notice of these other humans. As soon as I released the injured bird its mate left me in peace and followed its injured partner.

Iqtidar Ali,
c/o G.R. C-van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

Sir,

THE BELLIGERENT SUNBIRD

I was interested in the article of this title in the October *Bulletin*. It reminded me of a similar incident I saw in my garden here at Korogwe. It is some years ago now, so I am not sure at what time of year it took place, though I have a record of collecting flowers off the tree in November and it is about to flower now in late October.

A male Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Nectarinia senegalensis* took possession of a tree in full bloom of *Deinbollia borbonica*. This is a native tree called locally *Mbwakabwaka*. It was only about 1.5m high but had put out a big display of flowers at the top; the flowers are small and white but very attractive to insects and Sunbirds. This sunbird defended the tree against all comers from a perch amongst the flowers. I was not sure whether he was primarily interested in the nectar or in the many insects visiting the flowers. It is well known that this kind of sunbird does eat butterflies and other large insects. However, I only saw him there on the one day and not for a continuous period as described in Mrs Simpson's note.

Mary E. Archbold,
Box 533, Korogwe,
Tanzania.

Sir,

CANNING DIOCHS

Priscilla Allen is perhaps over-enthusiastic in claiming priority for the idea of tinning or freezing Diochs for the European market, (*E.Afr. nat. Hist.Soc.Bull.*: 181).

When the Mwea-Tebere Irrigation Scheme was new, about 1956, and it was important to demonstrate that good crops of rice could be profitably grown, the Diochs ate it. The Manager of the project was a man with considerable experience of growing irrigated rice in the far East, but was near despair. He had got as far as labelling his (imaginary) product "Buttered Breast of Rice-Fed Dioch".

There may well be other claims to priority for the idea of tinning Diochs from exasperated "Agricolas".

W.G. Dyson,
E.A.A.F.R.O., Muguga,
Box 30148, Nairobi.

Sir,

IDENTIFICATION OF FRIGATE BIRDS - A POSTCRIPT

Since sending our letter on the identification of frigate birds, which appeared in the November issue (pp. 185 - 186), we have received two letters on the subject from A.W. Diamond of the Edward Grey Institute, Oxford, England. He points out that there is an immature in the British Museum (Natural History) collection which cannot (yet) be identified, and that immatures are next to impossible to identify. However, he says that he is quite confident, having seen the slide taken by C.F.M. of one of the Malindi birds, that it was an immature female *Fregata minor*, on the grounds of its extremely long, heavy and straight bill. he does not, however, rule out *F. andrewsi*, but thinks it extremely unlikely to have been this species because of its range.

Some of the frigate birds seen on the East African coast may well originate from Aldabra, about 800km east of Malindi, where both *F. minor* and *F. ariel* breed. So it worth noting that A.W. Diamond marked a number of both species there two years ago with numbered white plastic wing-tags.

Lastly we should like to correct the spelling of R. Stjernstedt's name in our previous letter. This was our error.

C.F. Mann & P.L. Britton.
Box 337, Kapsabet &
P.O. Yala.

Sir,

RINGING RECORDS

The party who ringed the 592 birds in a day at Kariobangi recently (last issue p. 187) deserves the "Guinness Award" for October. But they cannot claim the first two records, although I think the last five can be "ratified". In *Ibis* 1971, Leslie Brown and Alan Root report the ringing of as many as 2300 Lesser Flamingo chicks in a day at Lake Magadi in 1962. This enormous figure may well stand indefinitely as the record number of birds ringed in Kenya or East Africa in a single day.

Peter L. Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala.

SOCIETY NOTICES

Sunday, 5th December : There will be a combined bird walk and "dudu crawl" led by Dennie Angwin and Mike Clifton. Please meet at the Marina Club, Naivasha at 10 a.m. There will be a small charge for non-members of the Club. Bring a picnic lunch, or use the Club's facilities. It would be advisable to bring gum-boots as we will be operating near the water's edge.

Monday, 6th December : The film "Pippa", of Joy Adamson's work with her Cheetah will be shown in the National Museum Hall at 5.15 p.m. Arrive early to avoid disappointment, and PLEASE, members only!

Monday 20th December : A fifty minute film on research in the Serengeti "Man, Beast and the Land" will be shown in the National Museum Hall at 5.15 p.m. Again arrive early to ensure a seat.

Wedensday morning bird walks will not be held during December. Weekly bird walks will start again in 1972. If anyone would attend regularly if the time or day were changed, please write to Mrs Ng'weno c/o The Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi with suggestions.

As most of the Post Box Numbers in the Nairobi area have been altered, will all members please let us know their correct Box Number before the New Year. The Society Box Number is now 44486, Nairobi.

You will have read Dr. Ebbel's letter elsewhere in this issue, that he has suggested that a list of members of the Society be compiled and that their interests should also be indicated. We would appreciate members reactions to this idea as the preparation of such a list would involve quite a lot of time and work. If the general feeling is that it would be a good thing, voluntary help would be required . . . any offers!

Talking of volunteers, would any member with a little time to spare, please come and help with the *Bulletin* during the last week or so of each month. Even an hour or so on the "tread mill", assembling, stapling, addressing envelopes and putting things into them would be a great help and would give the usual band of "willing horses" a bit of a rest! Any offers gratefully received at the Library, National Museum.

Would any members who do not wish to keep their copies of the *Journal* or the *Bulletin*, please return them to the Secretary, we are short of back numbers of the *Bulletin* particularly.

May we wish all members and friends a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year! Please remember that subscriptions fall due on 1st January 1972.

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NEW MEMBERS - NOVEMBER 1971

Full Members:

Mrs Daphne M. Ball, Box 21029, Nairobi.
Mr John Barthelme, Mutindwa Harambee High School, P.O. Chogoria, via Meru, Kenya.
Miss Joy Bazeley, Box 47272, Nairobi.
Mr T.D. Scott Bolton, Box 30089, Nairobi.
Mr J.T.P. Boston, Kings College; Budo, Box 7121, Kampala, Uganda.
Mr P.J.S. Hewett, Box 40034, Nairobi.
Miss Mollie Pullan, Kijabe High School, Box 59, Kijabe, Kenya.
Mr J. Spencer, Box 14547, Nairobi.
Mr G.E. Turle, Box 7616, Nairobi.
Mr Micheal Marsden, Box 25208, Nairobi.
Mr Reuel Mwangi, P.O. Iriguini, via Thika, Kenya.
Mr Lawrence Mwangi, Faculty of Science, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr Hitoshi Ueda, Inst. of African Studies, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Dr P.M.A. Van Zwanenberg, Dept. of Anatomy, Box 30197, Nairobi.

Junior Member:

Richard Hewett, Box 40034, Nairobi.

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LIBRARY NOTICES

The following books have disappeared out of the Library. Would anyone who knows anything about them, please inform the Librarian?

Roberts, Austin - Birds of South Africa, revised by G.R. McLachlan & R. Liversidge. Cape Town, repr. 1969.

Fuchs, V.E. - The geological history of the Lake Rudolf Basin, Kenya Colony. Philos. Trans. Roy. Soc. Lond. 1939.

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THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

President: J. S. Karmali, Esq.
Vice President: Mrs. A. L. Campbell.
Hon. Editor: J. E. Afr. nat. Hist. Soc. and Nat. Mus.: Dr. P. J. Greenway; assisted by Mrs. J. Hayes.
Hon. Secretary: Miss P. M. Allen.
Hon. Asst. Secretary: Miss D. Angwin.
Hon. Treasurer: D. Morris, Esq.
Executive Committee (in addition to the above): G. C. Backhurst (*Hon. Ringing Organiser* and *Hon. Editor, Bulletin*); M. P. Clifton, Esq.; A. D. Forbes-Watson, Esq.; Mrs. H. Ng'weno; R. E. F. Leakey, Esq.; Dr. T. R. Odhiambo.

Co-opted members: Mrs. C. Collins; A. Duff-MacKay, Esq.; Dr. F. A. Mutere.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes a leading and highly respected scientific journal —*The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* From the beginning of 1971 each issue will consist usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page will be issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Kabete, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Hon. Secretary, Box 4486, Nairobi.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*.

The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5 X 23cm (10 X 8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5 X 23cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in "Letraset", neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material.

Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY *BULLETIN*, 1971

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Compiled by D.L. Ebbels,
Ukiriguru, Box 1433, Mwanza,
Tanzania.

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A NEW NOMENCLATURE

A scientific ornithologist may claim
To know each bird by its 'latin' name,
But still he will seek both far and wide
Or spend hours cramped in a tiny hide
Just for a glimpse of a species new
And to keep his LIFE LIST ahead of you

So bird-watchers or ornithologists
Equipped with counters and check lists
You no doubt will be familiar
With this new nomenclature.
Below is for those who have yet to find
Enjoyment of this plebeian kind

When for the first time a bird you see
A LIFER it is known to be
And if you set out with the thought in mind
That lifers you are going to find,
Nostalgically visit a type locality,
Or diligently hunt for a rarity
There is no reasonable doubt
That you are a true TWITCHER at heart.
If the identity you positively confirm
The right to TICK it you do earn.
Should you be able to feast your eyes,
Then this is known as to SANITISE
But if not sure, or you only think
It must have been a HOODWINK.
VALUE is a bird exceptionally fair,
Seen to advantage, or very rare.
BOP is to some a bird of prey
But to others an expression to say
When your companion fails to twitch the bird
That you yourself have seen or heard.
A WIPE-OUT is the ultimate aim
For all who enter in this game.
This term, for example, you may apply
When you see your last Kenya wattle-eye,
Or CRIP all that is endemic
In forest patch or coastal thicket.

ANON.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MWANZA GULF, SMITH SOUND AND ADJACENT AREAS, TANZANIA

I. The environment and vegetation

TOPOGRAPHY and CLIMATE

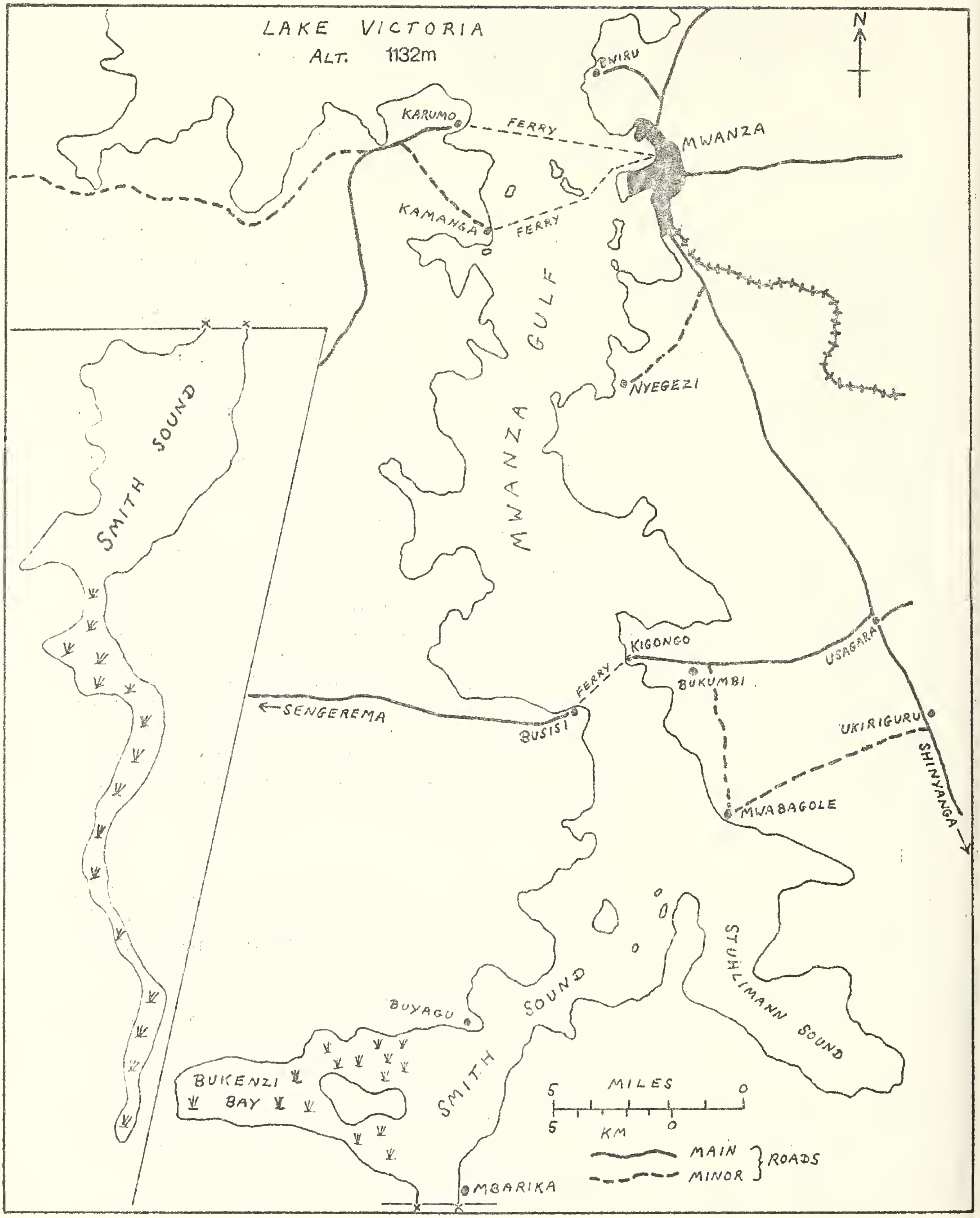
Mwanza Gulf and Smith Sound appear so insignificant on the usual small scale maps depicting Lake Victoria that many people, even in East Africa, are unaware of their existence. In almost any other part of the world such a considerable body of water would constitute a major landmark. Mwanza Gulf and Smith Sound, here together called the Sound, form the southernmost extension of Lake Victoria (map): an almost fjord-like tongue of water stretching due south from Speke Gulf for a distance of over 80km. On either side of the Sound are ranges of low hills and inselbergs, mainly granitic, but sometimes of banded ironstone (which is occasionally auriferous), and nowhere rising much above 1300m. Between them are shallow valleys of alkaline black clay soil known as *mbuga*.

There are no large or permanent rivers in this area, which suffers a severe dry season from mid-May until the end of October. Rainfall is erratic and diminishes progressively towards the south from an average of about 1000mm annually at Mwanza to perhaps 750mm at the southern end of Smith Sound. The level of Lake Victoria has fluctuated considerably since records began in 1899, having been lowest in 1923 and highest in 1964. The difference between these extremes is just over 3m. Examination of figures given by Mörth (1967) shows that there is an average annual fluctuation of 41cm, the water level usually being highest at the end of May and lowest in February and at the end of October, with a slight rise in December; a pattern to be expected from the rainfall distribution in much of the catchment area.

FLOWERING PLANTS

Except in places where the shore consists of large rocks and boulders, there is an almost continuous growth of *Cyperus papyrus* along the water's edge. In sheltered places these papyrus beds are very large indeed and may be a kilometre in width. The most extensive beds are to be found in Bukenzi Bay and at the southern end of Smith Sound (map); in both places there is very little open water to be seen. It has been shown that evaporation from an old stand of papyrus is about 60% of Penman estimates of evaporation from an open water surface (Rijks, 1969), so that large areas of floating papyrus may assist considerably in water conservation. On the other hand, it depletes the water immediately below it of dissolved oxygen, thus rendering large areas unsuitable for fish and other aerobic organisms without special adaptations.

Although the sheltered waters of the Sound never become as rough as the open Lake, there is evidently ample wind and wave action to tear away large parts of the papyrus beds which are then driven before the wind as floating islands. These floating islands are commonly seen during the


LAKE VICTORIA
ALT. 1132m
N
BWIRU
KARUMO
FERRY
MWANZA
KAMANGA
FERRY
MWANZA GULF
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SMITH SOUND
KIGONGO
USAGARA
BUKUMBI
FERRY
← SENGEREMA
BUSISI
UKIRIGURU
SHINYANGA →
MWABAGOLE
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MBARIKA

SKETCH MAP OF MWANZA GULF AND SMITH SOUND rains and generally move in a northerly direction, occasionally blocking the ferry terminals at Kigongo, Busisi and Mwanza. They must be an important factor in the distribution of both the papyrus and the animal life which it supports or shelters. Although they appear so damp and green, the aerial growth of the papyrus beds can burn vigorously if ignited, probably due to the accumulation of dead material in the old stands and perhaps assisted by oils in the green culms.

When Speke first visited this area in 1858, the land was covered with bush and woodland, but it is now severely disafferested. The gentler hill slopes are quite intensively cultivated, while the uncultivated areas are heavily grazed by cattle, sheep and goats, especially the mbugas.

At Ukiriguru the vegetation on the uncultivated and rocky slopes of Ukiriguru Hill has been protected from cutting and fires for many years. Although the original vegetation had probably been much disturbed before this protection began, the composition of the present (mostly secondary) growth is an interesting indication of what the original vegetation might have been. At present the vegetation is mainly composed of small deciduous trees and shrubs of average height about 4m. Beneath, there is a rather sparse growth of herbs and grasses, with a few climbers. The largest trees which stand out above the general canopy, are *Afzelia quanzensis* and *Ficus* spp., while *Canthium burtii*, *Dalbergia nitidula*, *Zanha africana*, *Harrisonia abyssinica*, *Markhamia obtusifolia*, *Phyllanthus engleri*, *Strophanthus eminii*, *Combretum* spp. and *Strychnos* spp. are common among the smaller trees. *Acacia* spp. are relatively uncommon. Common climbers or trailers include *Cissus rotundifolia*, *Combretum purpureiflorum* and *Jasminum fluminense*.

The woody vegetation which remains on the hills nearer the Sound consists of species which are worthless for timber or firewood, and those which can withstand constant cutting. *Ficus* spp., *Grewia* spp., *Sterculia leguminosacea*, and some *Combretum* spp. are common.

At Ukiriguru, of the 305 plant species recorded on the rocky part of the Hill, 56% have not been found in other habitats here. The soils lower down the catena associated with these granite inselbergs have many fewer plants peculiar to them, although there is much variation in the frequency of occurence of different plants according to the soil and drainage.

CRYPTOGAMS

The Bryophyte and Pteridophyte flora of this area is very poor, as might be expected in a rather dry climate. At Ukiriguru there are probably less than a dozen species of mosses or ferns, and hepatics seem to be absent. Mosses are mostly found on artificial substrates such as concrete water tanks and damp walls.

The fungus flora, apart from crop pathogens, is not well known. Of 170 plant disease specimens collected during the last three years, about 4% are probably caused by fungi as yet undescribed, and perhaps as many as 30% represent new records of one sort or another. The rusts seem to have received the most attention; fairly recent collections have been made in Tanzania by several workers. However the national plant disease lists of East Africa are badly in need of revision, and for Tanzania perhaps the most useful work on this subject is by Angus (1962-1966).

The larger fungi, particularly terrestial members of the Agaricales, are well represented here. They occur all through the the rains, but a noticeable flush occurs in December and again later in the season if heavy rain follows a dry period. In intact miombo woodland, such as the Geita Forest Reserve, the display of mushrooms and toadstools in December can be very colourful. This group of fungi seems to have received little attention in Tanzania and would provide great scope for careful study; many species are used for food by the local people (particulary by people living in well-wooded areas, such as the Waha).

D.L. Ebbels,
Box 1433,
Mwanza, Tanzania.

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ONE-LEG

As it is not easy to identify with certainty an individual Augur Buzzard *Buteo rufofuscus augur*, the story of One-Leg may be of interest.

When we first came to look at this house with a view to buying it in January 1955, we were preceded up the drive by an Augur Buzzard with one leg down. One-Leg, as she inevitably came to be known, has been here ever since; this garden and the surrounding fields are her territory and a dead tree at the bottom of the lawn, preserved especially for birds, her favourite perch.

She has had several mates over the years, her present one, unoriginally christened Blackamoor, is a handsome melanistic type who has been faithful to her for five or six years. They are never far apart and their continual calling to each other, either from the tops of adjacent trees or when on the wing, is a familiar background to our lives. One-Leg has a considerably lower-pitched voice than Blackamoor and I wonder if this may be due to her advanced age.

To our astonishment they have recently produced an offspring - totally dark brown except for some white feathers at the end of its noticeably long tail and below the wings. The first time I saw Sambo, as we call "him", he was standing on the lawn triumphantly clutching a bright green chamaelon in one foot. The next morning he was strutting about the lawn peering into flower beds, presumably searching for more chamaeleons. But during the fortnight or so that he has been around we have never seen him catch any more food, nor have we seen his parents feed him. Most of his day is spent perched on One-Leg's special tree wailing pathetically. Sometimes we feed him mole-rats on top of an adjacent macrocarpa hedge and he pounces on them avidly and eats them on the spot. Once he was joined by Blackamoor, each devouring his own mole-rat a few feet apart.

One day I was watching all three Augurs soaring high overhead when suddenly One-Leg made several what appeared to be vicious attacks on Sambo, swooping down on him at great speed with talons outstretched. Chasing him out of her territory, or merely giving him flying lessons?

The interesting thing to us is that not only has One-Leg produced an offspring at the age of 19 years or more (she was in full adult plumage when we first saw her in 1955), but also that this is the first time in all these years that she has brought - or allowed? - her young into the garden.

The nest is in a tree in a small wood at the bottom end of our farm, but unfortunately it has been impossible, for various reasons, to keep a systematic watch on it.

Mrs D.M. Sheppard,
Tumaini,
P.O. Turi, Kenya.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

"ALBINO" WHITE PELICAN IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK

The White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* is a migratory bird and during certain times of the year occurs in large flocks in the Park. In the adult White Pelican the primary and secondary flight feathers are black and conspicuous when the birds are in flight. While on the ground the birds generally appear wholly white because the primary and secondary feathers are folded inward.

On two occasions I was amazed to see a White Pelican with no black colouration in the flight feathers, flying close to the shore of Lake Edward in the Park. On another occasion I deliberately disturbed a large flock of White Pelicans near River Nyamagusani and carefully observed the flight feathers as the birds took off. I was once again lucky to see another "albino" White Pelican. On several other occasions, however, I failed to see any such "albino" birds.

It appears that the "albino" White Pelicans must be very rare in the population and hence have escaped attention. Can anyone throw some more light on this very rare plumage of the White Pelican? Would any member who has noticed an "albino" pelican please let me know and also describe the colour of the bill and the pouch, it may or may not be similar to that of the adult bird.

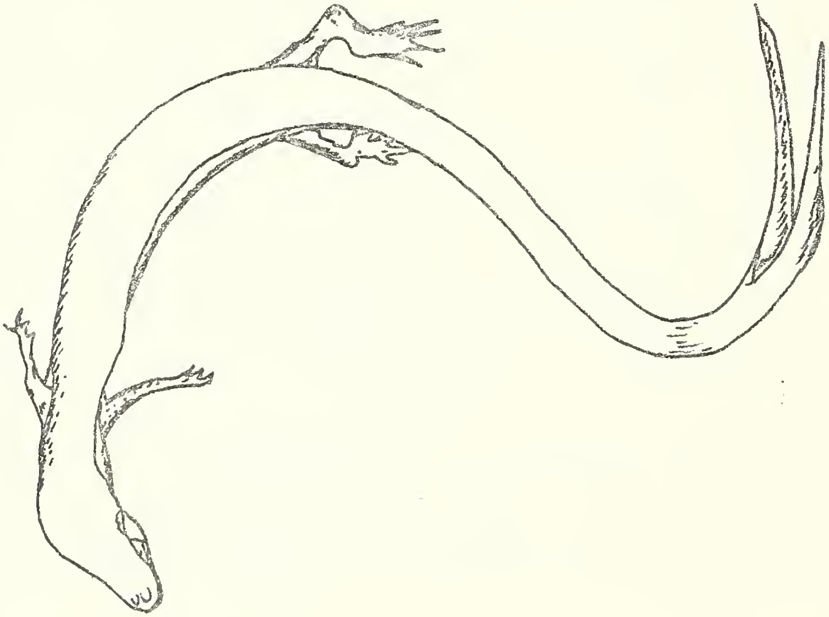
N.A. Din,
Queen Elizabeth National Park,
Box 22, Lake Katwe,
Uganda.

AN UNUSUAL CASE OF VERTICAL BIFURCATION IN *ABLEPHARUS WAHLBERGI*

During a visit to the Kedong Ranch in the Rift Valley, 36.30'E., 1.0'S., situated a few kilometres off the Narok road from its junction with the main Nairobi - Nakuru road, at an altitude of 1900 m, numerous skinks were observed in the vicinity of lava rock outcrops. One specimen, later identified as *Ablepharus wahlbergi* (Smith), was observed to have an apparent malformation of the tail. In order to make a more detailed examination, the creature was caught and removed to the E.A.V.R.O. laboratories at Muguga where it was kept for several weeks before eventually dying.

Closer examination showed that the specimen exhibited a rather unusual case of vertical bifurcation of the tail. Although it is generally accepted that lateral bifurcation is relatively common in lizards and skinks, vertical bifurcation is less readily encountered, although specific references relating to either condition could not be traced.

The skink was preserved in 70% alcohol and brought back to England where subsequent examination of X-ray plates showed that vertebrae extended along both branches. This condition is most likely to have arisen by regeneration following an incomplete separation; either by double regeneration or the growth of a secondary neomorphic tail. The injury may have been caused through



Ablepharus wahlbergi showing vertical bifurcation of the tail. (X 3) escaping from a predator or accidentally being stepped on by a larger animal.

A. wahlerbi is a fairly common savannah species having a wide distribution extending from Somalia in the north, through to Natal in the south.

M.A. Peirce,
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food,
Central Veterinary Laboratory,
New Haw, Weybridge,
Surrey, England.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

POLLINATION OF *KIGELIA* FLOWERS BY BATS

My attention was drawn to this aspect of botany when checking some references apropos the Wild Banana *Ensete ventricosum*. Peter Hudson reffered me to Professor E.J.H. Corner's book "The Life of Plants" in which the Professor makes what appeared to me at first, the fantastic statement that certain flowers are bat pollinated! and I quote, p.206 - "the sausage tree *Kigelia* of Africa . . . are bat-pollinated bignoniaceous trees . . . red-flowered wild bananas are said to be bird-pollinated, those with purple or brown flowers bat-pollinated". The flowers of *E. ventricosum* are greenish-white and my observations suggest only insect-pollination.

I referred to possible bird-pollination of my *Kigelia* as the reason for the huge crop of fruit produced at Karen in 1970 (*E.A.N.H.S. Bull.* 1971:29). My curiosity, stimulated by Prof. Corner's account, sent me off to look at the flowers of my *Kigelia* and there I found clear evidence of sunbird bill holes in the corolla of the flowers, not all but about 60 per cent were so punctured. The puncture to the base of the corolla ranged from 6.0 to 3.0cm i.e. the bill-length of the larger sunbirds seeking the copious nectar offered by these flowers. Birds are to be seen daily on my tree. However, an examination of the petals showed numerous wounds or scratch marks which might have been made by bird claws (Fig.I). These marks suggest that some creature had held on to the petals in order, presumably, to enable the head to enter the corolla. The piercing of the corolla would not effect pollination since the bill is not in contact with anther and stamens but a small sunbird could, nevertheless, enter the corolla and would stand on the lip and lateral petal in order to do so.

To prove whether or not bats could pollinate I carefully examined just-expanding buds and flowers in the late evening and the petals were all free of scratch marks, these flowers were marked and then examined the following morning at 06.00 hours and to my surprise each flower bore traces of scratch marks on the lip and lateral petals and some stigmas carried pollen grains, as seen under the microscope. Thus birds could not have pollinated these flowers and therefore pollination must have been carried out by bats.

How was this operation executed? Prof. Corner's book has an excellent photograph of a bat *Leptomycteris* hovering in front of the flowers of an *Agave* and I have adapted this to illustrate what would happen in the case of a *Kigelia* flower (Fig.II) but this would not account for the scratch marks on the petals, for the creature must grasp these.

Night observations are far from easy and I failed to see any bats at or near the flowers and there are at least three species of bats at Karen which appear, regular as clockwork, at 18.50 hours nightly. Two mist nets were erected by the tree in the hope that bats could be captured for examination and the result was highly satisfactory for three were taken, *Rousettus aegyptiacus*. These are Fruitbats, however it appeared at first, that these were far too big to be the pollinating agents, but watching a caged living specimen and then testing the flowers with a dead specimen, it became obvious that even this large species could, in fact, hold on to the flower with its claws (and wing claw) and so thrust its head into the corolla. (Bat approximately 12 cm: wing spread 64 cm: weight around 112 g). Picking several flowers I found that the scratch marks were generally almost in a row and five in number.

Next was to find pollen grains on the bat and this was achieved, between the ears! (Fig.111). On examination of the tongue of the bat it was found that this was sufficiently long, when fully extended, to reach down to the nectar. The tongue has a remarkable series of papillae on the dorsal surface, quite rough to the touch, so what is the function of this roughened surface?

One living bat was caged and having been in the net most of the night, would I presumed, be hungry. I offered it a small guava, one knocked down by bats. The fruit was immediately seized, firstly between the wing-hooks and brought down to the mouth which could be opened to a remarkable gape. The bat commenced to feed but not by chewing and using the formidable teeth but by rasping away at the peel, then pith and pulp with the tongue, and in five minutes the fruit had been reduced to half its original volume and with the aid of the wing-hooks the fruit was turned around in the mouth. This method of feeding was new to me and may be of interest to readers.

I am now a believer in bat-pollination and this experience has opened up, for me, an interesting new aspect of biology and the relationship between flowers and pollinating agents. If any reader has any data on bat-pollination, I would be glad to have these and particularly data on Wild Banana pollination. Daily examination of my Wild Banana at Karen reveals no indication that creatures other than bees act as pollinators.

The fact that bats are involved in pollination gives rise to speculation and much food for thought and something for botanist and mammologist to sort out. Does the bat distribution overlap that of *Kigelia* throughout East Africa? Is the paucity of fruit on some trees due to lack of bats? How many species of bats are involved in pollination? Are all, most or only some Bignoniaceae bat pollinated? Why is it that many exotic species of Bignonia cultivated in gardens so seldom produce fruit, for the plants flower well but maybe we dont have the correct agent; therefore what is the agent in the plants' native habitat?

Observations could be made on some of the following, particularly those such as *Kigelia* which open at dusk. *Fernandoa magnifica* at the coast, *Markhamia* spp., *Stereospermum kunthianum* (possibly rather small) or the upright cups of *Spathodea campanulata*. Maybe, as Professor Corner reports,

POLLINATION of KIGELIA FLOWERS

Bird or Bat?

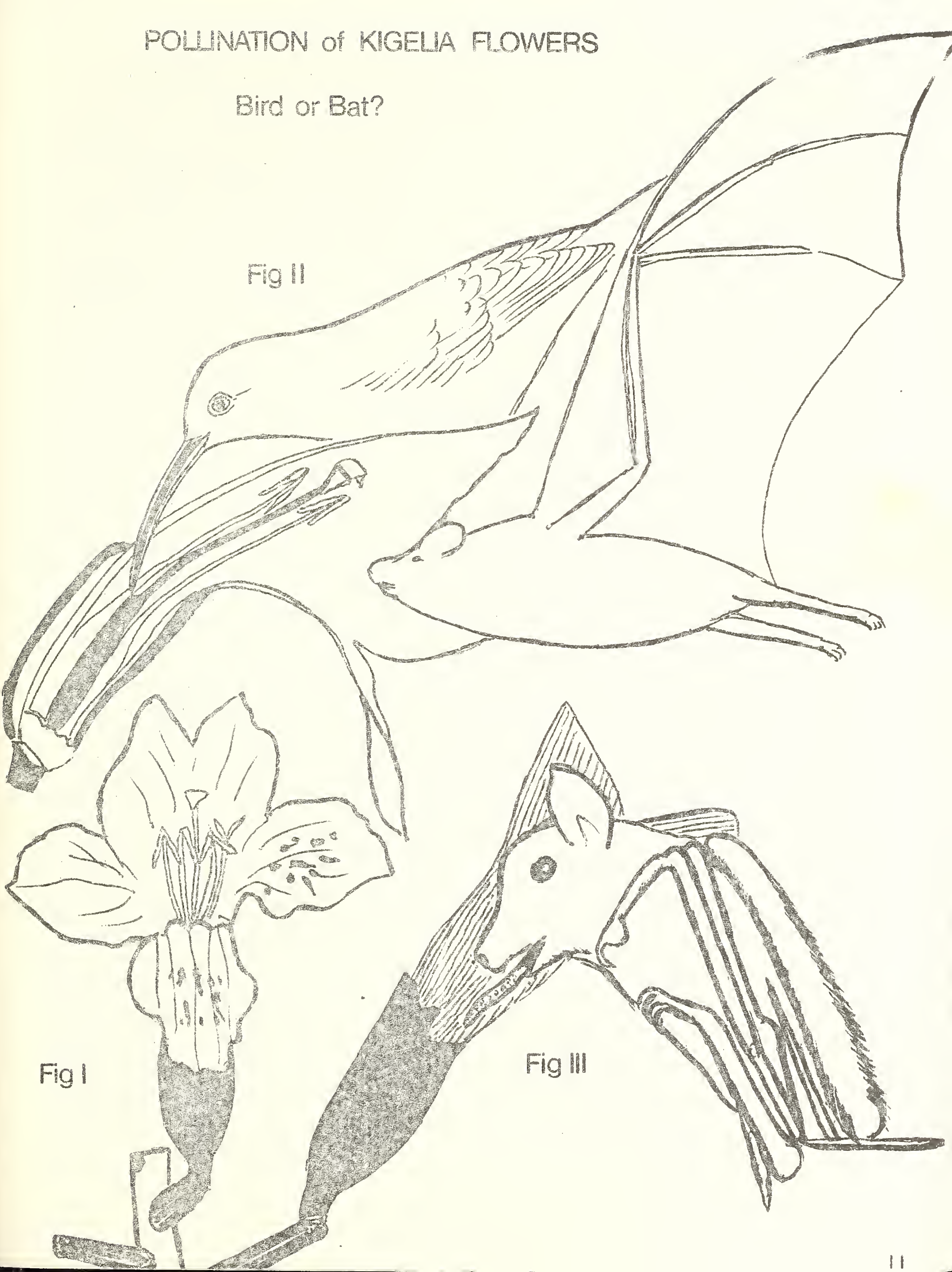


Fig II

Fig I

Fig III

the nocturnal Baobab, *Adansonia digitata* is bat pollinated, similarly some Bombax-Malva set of families. In America, *Bauhinia*, so possibly also local *Bauhinia* and related genera.

Finally, we have just found that these fruit-bats not only eat fruit and suck nectar, but also chew the leaves of *Erythrina abyssinica**, why? and I now quote Professor Corner again. p.206 - "The answer is not in books, which are too specialised, but waits the biologist who can appreciate both plants and animals in tropical life".

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen.

* Part II. (Next issue)

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A BREEDING RECORD OF SHARPE'S STARLING

CYNNYRICINCLUS SHARPII IN THE ARUSHA NATIONAL PARK

Mackworth-Praed & Grant have little to say about this species so the following note should be of interest.

The bird is a resident in the forests of Mt. Meru and the Ngurdoto Crater, and part of both these areas lie within the Arusha National Park in Northern Tanzania. The forests at their lowest altitude of 1400 m are composed mainly of *Diospyros abyssinica*, *Olea welwitschii*, *O. hochstetteri*, (Loliondo) and *O. africana*. From 1700 m to 1800m on Ngurdoto Crater, characteristic trees are *Cassipourea malosana* and *Casearia* with emergent *Entandophragma*. On Mt. Meru from 1700 m to 2100 m *O. hochstetteri* is dominant, and from 2100 m to 2600 m co-dominants are *Juniperus procera* and *Podocarpus gracilior*.

Sharpe's Starling is not an easy bird to find or observe as it frequents the canopy of the forest trees where it feeds mainly on fruits. The song is quite distinct however, well described by Sessions, and this advertises the bird's presence.

A nomadic bird, it travels in small parties or sometimes in congretations of well over a hundred, seeking areas where trees are in fruit, particularly *Olea* spp. At the Ngurdoto Gate of the park they usually arrive in June or July, stay for two or three months, then work their way upward into the higher forests. They are irregular as Sessions states *op. cit.*, for in 1969 very few were seen.

The first evidence of intended breeding was seen on 20th September 1971 when birds were observed exploring holes in trees on the Ngurdoto Crater rim at 1700 m and on 10th October 1971 in the Mt. Meru forest at 2300 m. Pairs were then found over a large area, the males at song-posts and courtship was observed. It appeared as though the large gathering from Ngurdoto Gate at 1400 m had spread upwards and outwards through the forest to breed.

Eventually, on 1st January 1971 a nest was found. It was in a hole in the vertical bole of a dead tree, in the forest about 100 m from the

Ngurdoto Gate right next to the approach road. The entrance hole faced east and appeared to be about 5 cm in diameter, some 14 m from the ground. The male was singing at the top of a tree nearby and the female was feeding the nestlings. Her approach to the nest was cautious, flitting through the canopy then quickly diving into the hole. Each time on emerging, she poked her head and chest out, looked around for almost a minute, then flew straight back into the canopy. The nestlings were not so cautious and could be heard making a churring noise after her departure.

A further note: in early June 1970, several juveniles were seen with a large flock of adults at Ngurdoto Gate.

John S.S. Beesley,
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134,
Arusha, Tanzania.

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AN UNUSUAL POST-MORTEM FINDING

IN AN AUGUR BUZZARD *BUTEO RUFOFUSCUS*

A melanistic Augur Buzzard *Buteo rufofuscus* was found by the road at Njoro, Kenya on 29th September, 1971 by Mr L. Frank. It was in a dazed state and died following a small injection of a sedative.

When examined at Kabete the bird, a male, was found to contain a snake, a Striped Skaapsteker *Psammophylax tritaeniatus multisquamis* in the gizzard. The snake measured 25 cm in length and was in very fresh condition, suggesting it had only just been swallowed before the bird was struck by a car.

Reptiles are probably not uncommonly eaten by Augur Buzzards. Mackworth-Praed & Grant record "small mammals, reptiles and insects" as the normal food of the species but Williams states that "it preys almost entirely upon rodents" whilst Brown gives "mammals, birds, insects" as the prey preference of the species.

The Striped Skaapsteker is found in many parts of Africa and has been recorded from several localities in Kenya. It is a "rear-fanged" snake (subfamily Boiginae) but is only mildly venomous.

J.E. Cooper,
c/o Vet Lab,
P.O. Kabete.

REFERENCES:

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Brown, Leslie H. African Birds of Prey.

THE SPARROWS ARE COMING!

The House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* was introduced to coastal South Africa more than seventy years ago. The species has gradually spread northwards and about seven years ago first reached southern Zambia at Livingstone.

Its spread within Zambia has been quite closely followed, increasingly so more recently. In August this year it was ". . unrecorded (but must occur now) from Northern Province. Similarly unrecorded from Eastern Province!", R.J. Dowsett, Zambian Ornithological Society Newsletter. Vol.I, Number 3. However, late in October came the first report of them at Mbala, Northern Province, just 23 km from the Tanzanian border!, Glyn Thomas, Z.O.S. Newsletter. Vol.I, Number 5.

It is clear that the House Sparrow is poised for expansion still further northward into southern Tanzania, where it should be looked for in all urban areas from now on.

So look out, the Sparrows are coming!

John J. Tucker,
Zambian Ornithological Society,
Box 3944, Lusaka,
Zambia.

EGYPTIAN PLOVER IN KENYA

The Egyptian Plover *Pluvianus aegyptius* is not recorded from Kenya (Backhurst & Backhurst 1970, Forbes-Watson 1971). In August 1971, while on safari round the extreme north western corner of Lake Rudolf between Todenyang and Namaraputh, I saw eight Egyptian Plovers at very close range; at the time I made the following description.

"A beautifully coloured Sandpiper shaped bird with the distinctive Sandpiper-like flight. Grey wings with a black and white pattern showing in flight. Black crown, mantle and back. White stripe above eye meeting at back of head. Black band below white breast and throat. Creamy yellow belly and flanks."

The birds were remarkably tame; this would appear to be the first record of this species for Kenya.

Mike Goddard,
Mutige Secondary School,
Box 91, Kerugoya,
Kenya.

Dr Oscar T. Owre has confirmed (*in litt.*) that he did not encounter this species and it will not, therefore, appear in his forthcoming book "Birds of Lake Rudolf".

Ed.

BIRDS AND WATER

I was interested in Mr Cunningham - van Someren's notes on a bird shower party in the May 1971 issue of the *Bulletin*. While living in Arusha Chini, a few kilometres south of Moshi, Tanzania, in 1965, I frequently used a lawn sprinkler in the dry season, and this too attracted parties of White-eyes *Zosterops abyssinica*. They were joined by other birds, principally Variable and Scarlet-chested Sunbirds *Nectarinia venusta* and *N. senegalensis* and Taveta Golden Weavers *Ploceus castaneiceps*.

This rather arid area is very hot during the dry season, and many birds came to bathe and drink in the furrow that ran past the garden. These were mostly seed-eating types who, in my experience, are thirsty birds, and included Common and Crimson-rumped Waxbills *Estrilda astrild* and *E. rhodopyga*, Rufous-backed and Bronze Mannikins *Lonchura bicolor* and *L. cucullata*, Silverbills and Grey-headed Silverbills *L. malabrica* and *L. griseicapilla* and Yellow-rumped Seed-eaters *Serinus atrogularis*. Generally they used parts of the furrow that were quite unshaded and without the concealment offered by bushes although predatory birds were common.

In the forested parts of the Arusha National Park on the cooler slopes of Mount Meru bathing and drinking almost always takes place where tiny streams pass under a thick mass of shrubbery. A further requirement in this area where streams may be fresh, salt or soda, is that the water must be fresh and also almost still, only a few centimetres deep. Apart from the few seed-eating birds inhabiting this biotope, such as Rufous-backed Mannikin, Green-backed Twinspot *Hypargos nitidulus* and Crimson-wings *Cryptospiza* spp., several species of fruit and/or insect eating birds also indulge in this activity, notably, Olive Thrush *Turdus abyssinicus*, Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*, Stripe-cheeked and Mountain Greenbuls *Andropadus milanjensis* and *A. tephrolaemus*, Collared Sunbird *Anthreptes collaris*, Olive Sunbird *N. olivacea*, Broad-ringed White-eye *Z. senegalensis eurycricotus* and the White-eyed Slaty Flycatchers *Melaenornis chocolatina* who sometimes come in parties of up to eight for a communal bath.

On the higher slopes of Meru, in the crater at 2500 m there is a tiny spring where, in addition to the thirsty White-eyes the Yellow-crowned Canary *Serinus canicollis* and Streaky Seed-eater *S. striolatus* refresh themselves.

Away from the mountain, in the drier bush around Momela Lakes, there is a small spring of fresh water running into the alkaline waters of one of the lakes, and here, where the streamlet spreads out over the stones and game-trampled mud, flocks of birds gather to drink, again mainly Waxbills, including parties of Yellow-bellied Waxbills *E. melanotis*.

These little oases are often limited and if one finds such a place, it is well worth while to sit and wait, especially around mid-day, when most of the birds come - and if you have a picnic lunch, where better to have it?

John S.S. Beesley,
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134, Arusha, Tanzania.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

GUINEA FOWL IN THE N.F.D.

I recently arranged to have rebound two volumes of Dr Wilhelm Junker's "Travels in Africa" (translation published in early 1890's). On idling through Vol.2 before taking it to the bookshop, I noticed a drawing of a Vulterine Guinea Fowl? with the following passage alongside. Although this quotation may not be too helpful to Messrs. Brown and Dewhurst (1971, *E.A.N.H.S. Bull.*p.17), I thought it might be of interest as bearing some resemblance to the guinea fowl they describe:

"I saw for the first time a new kind of guinea fowl, the existence of which in these parts had been unknown to me. Its beautifully marked plumage resembles that of the Vulterine Guinea Fowl (*Numida vulturina*) . . . . . . the plumage, shot in parts with ultramarine, confirmed the existence in Central Africa either of the Vulterine Guinea Fowl . . . or some other bird closely resembling it. A RUFFLE OF BLACK VELVETY QUILLS GOES ROUND THE NECK FROM EAR TO EAR . . . . I met with single specimens afterwards . . . . chiefly on trees in the shady river forests".

Dr Junker was at the time apparently travelling in the Southern Sudan near the present Uganda border. These volumes are, I believe, in the Museum Library.

S. Heriz-Smith,
63 Coniston Avenue,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent, England.

Sir,

BOTANICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

There have been great stirrings in the Natural History world of Ethiopia in recent years.

UNESCO joined in and persuaded a group of able naturalists to produce a singularly interesting, well-written duplicated document called "Mother Nature". It was aimed, I am told, at schools.

UNESCO asked the Biology Panel of the Kenya Institute of Education to produce something similar for Kenya. In the process the chapter on vegetation developed a large bibliography. It soon became obvious that any amateur effort to "pot" the descriptions, zones or any other systematic work on Kenya's vegetation would be presumptious folly, as it has already been done in parts most thoroughly. Further, two major works are in the publisher's pipeline for future years.

An attempt was made to highlight the idea that all plants have the same basic requirements - light, warmth, water and nutrients. These are available in an infinite variety of combinations in Kenya, hence vegetation types vary so dramatically within short distances of each other. This great variety of types and wealth of species thus makes Kenya such an interesting country.

However the by-product of the effort, the bibliography that emerged, is by far the most important part and in the light of the list put out from the Herbarium by Dr gillet in the past, most useful. Dr Peter Holland, an exchange geographer/botanical ecologist from Mc Gill University, Canada, now at the University of Nairobi, has done a very great deal to put this into acceptable form and saw the typescript done. Naturally there will be omissions and in some cases possibly errors. Therefore, any member of the Society who would like a copy and be willing to help improve it for future reference is welcome to ask the Secretary of the Society for one, and all comments will be gratefully received.

Alma Glover,
Box 14466,
Westlands, Nairobi.

Sir,

BIRD MOVEMENTS IN NAIROBI

There seems to be an exodus of some of our bird table habitués twice in the year and I recently tried checking up on them at the National Museum library - without success. Praed & Grant mention local migrations for various species but this does not help. Friends in and around Nairobi with whom I have compared notes, often - though not always - agree on absences and I am wondering whether it would be interesting to compare more notes and perhaps come up with some sort of pattern of these migrations.

The following are examples in our own garden, near Spring Valley Police Station, Nairobi:

Our resident Purple Indigo Bird *Vidua chalybeata* and his two wives - have been absent since early October; their firefinch *Laganosticta senegala* companions are still here.

Our pair of Holub's Golden Weaver *Ploceus xanthops* have been absent much longer.

A small party of Chestnut Weavers *P. rubiginosus*, the two males in breeding dress, has been visiting us during the past week; they are usually here in November and April for a few days in company with Black-headed Weavers *P. cucullatus* (year round visitors).

Pink-breasted Doves *Streptopelia lugens* have just returned after a long, unrecorded absence. Perhaps they have been breeding elsewhere as there are now three of them!

Red-chested Cuckoos *Cuculus solitarius* have not been heard since mid-September. On 4th September an adult bird stunned itself against a plate glass window - the second time this has happened in several years - and we think it must have been the bird which had been flying around very conspicuously on low branches during the preceding fortnight. Since this could not have been the nesting season for its possible hosts, was this just a prelude to migration? I suppose it could have been searching for food at lower levels and, not finding sufficient, have departed to the forests?

Equally, the departures of the seed-eaters might coincide with harvest time, a real safari or a good patch of grass seeds just up the valley.

I fear this is abysmally elementary ornithology, but if anyone can bear with me, I shall be most grateful - and am only too happy to continue to make notes if they are likely to be of any general interest.

J. Standish King,
Box 40058, Nairobi.
13th November 1971.

Sir,

AN EARLIER BREEDING RECORD OF THE PARASITIC WEAVER

In our recent note in the *Bulletin* (October 1971 : 165-166) we reported two cases of breeding of the Parasitic Weaver *Anomalospiza imberbis* in western Kenya. Unfortunately we overlooked an earlier record involving an oviduct egg at Embakasi (near Nairobi) reported by Williams & Keith (1962, *Bull.Br.Orn.Club.* 82:141-142).

Peter & Hazel Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala, Kenya.

CORRECTION

In the Rev. Peter Hamel's letter, December *Bulletin* page 204, para. 4, the description of the possible White-collared Oliveback was incorrectly typed; it should read:

" . . . It might be a White-collared Oliveback *Nesocharis ansorgei* . . . . . It had a sooty black head and throat but did not appear to have a collar. Its mantle, rump and tail appeared to be rusty brown and the breast and belly appeared to be grey. The bill was black."

We must apologise to Mr Hamel for this mistake which materially altered his description of the bird.

Ed.

BIRDS AND CITRUS

A correspondent writes - "Citrus offers nesting sites for birds and they nest in such regularly - in the Nairobi area, many species - but I think the crux of the query is that of pesticides employed just prior to, and at the time of nesting. Many such compounds could be and are harmful to birds, but must be employed if the citrus is to be an economic proposition. Alas!

Citrus is subject to a great many pests which require special treatment, often with the use of dangerous insecticides, simply because there are no "safer" compounds which would be effective in dealing with the insect pests. Any well run commercial plantation will certainly require pest-control measures, and here is the catch".

Ed.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Although the Annual General Meeting will not be held until March next year, members are requested to send in their nominations for Office Bearers for the Executive Committee for 1972 as soon as possible.

As far as is known all are standing for re-election, please send your nominations to the Hon. Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi.

SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

BRITTON, P.L. & BROWN, L.H. 1971. Breeding sea-birds at the Kiunga Islands, Kenya. *Ibis* 113:364.

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WARD, P. 1971. The migration patterns of *Quelea quelea* in Africa. *Ibis* 113:275.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

8th - 9th January, 1971: There will be a one night camp at Baharini Wildlife Sanctuary, Nakuru. Mr John Hopcraft who is setting up the sanctuary will be on hand to take people round the Lake. A trip to Menengai Crater will also be arranged if members are interested. Drinking water will be available. Would those who wish to come on the camp, please fill in the enclosed form and return it to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi.

Monday 17th January, 1971. Mr Franz Hartmann A.R.P.S. has kindly agreed to give us a slide show of his wildlife photographs at the National Museum Hall, Nairobi at 5.15 p.m. His recent exhibition in Nairobi proved very popular and we are fortunate to have Mr Hartmann to talk to us.

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Wedensday morning bird walks will be resumed in January. Please meet Mrs Ng'weno at the National Museum at 9.00 a.m.

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FOR SALE

Grampion Parabolic reflector, sh.180/-
Ring Mrs Wilkinson, Tigoni 231.

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NEW MEMBERS - JANUARY 1972

Full Members:

Mrs C. Aschan, Box 44715, Nairobi.
Miss R. Bairnson, Kaaga Girls High School, Private Bag, Meru, Kenya.
Mr D. Belton, Mweka College of African Wildlife Management, Box 3031, Moshi, Tanzania.
Mr D.A. Bockett, Box 30101, Nairobi.
Mr M.W. Gregory, A.H.I.T.I., Box 29040, Nairobi.
Mrs M. Heath, Box 271, Malindi, Kenya.
Prof. & Mrs R.L. Holloway, Box 40469, Nairobi.
Institute of African Studies, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mrs A.M. Kelly, Box 30137, Nairobi.
Mr Eric Lucas, Falloden Cottage, Box 154, Ol Kalou, Kenya.
Mr P. Murphy, Box 14794, Nairobi.
Mr J.D.M. Sylvester, Box 30333, Nairobi.
Dr R.M. Watson, Box 15068, Nairobi.

Junior Member:

Miss S. Jerath, Box 3108, Nairobi.

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E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN FEBRUARY 1972

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FAIRFAX BELL AN APPRECIATION

The Society, and especially those interested in birds, have suffered a great loss in the death of Dr. Fairfax Bell just before Christmas. He was never in robust health during the time that I knew him. A poisoned leg in the days before antibiotics had left him permanently lame, and of late years emphysema and a weak heart had further curtailed his activities. But nobly aided by his wife Monica, he worked bravely on, and it was hoped that if he could be relieved of the work and worry of the farm, he might be watching birds with us for a long time to come, and his actual death was unexpected.

Coming of a clerical family, he was a practising Christian, a man of liberal opinions, wide interests and a fertile and original mind, always coming up with some new idea or scheme, so that the visitor never knew what he would be at. Many of these schemes of course did not work out in practice. On one occasion I found that he had heard or been told that Hornbills were good to eat; but I cannot say that the ensuing experiment was a success! On another occasion I helped him to fix a wooden leg onto a goose that for some reason had had its leg amputated. But the use of this prosthesis was beyond the patient's capacity, and it hopped about on the remaining leg with the wooden leg sticking out behind. However it survived to make I am sure a much better meal than the Hornbill. It was always fun to be with Fairfax, whether trying to sort out bird calls at Sirowa, or at the coast trying to sort out Sunbirds and getting into such a state of exasperation that we felt that if we had a gun we should have shot some of them.

The farm, Sirowa, Kaimosi, in Western Kenya was a remarkable place. On it Fairfax and Monica had built with their own hands aided by local Africans, a beautiful house of their own design, quite unlike anybody else's. Members of the Society, especially those interested in birds, were always welcome there, either to stay in the house or camp in the garden. Much of the farm was covered with forest when I first went there, and on even the part cleared for tea and coffee many large trees remained. Fairfax always hoped that part of the forest would be taken over by some authority and kept as permanent nature reserve. Meantime it was like a little piece of Kakamega forest all to oneself. Here the more unusual Cossyphas and Illadopsis could be recorded and even seen and studied inrensively. Down a glade one evening some of us watched about ten species of birds at a hatch of flying Termites, and listened to a wonderful concert from a Snowy-headed Cossypha.

But the growing human population is pressing hard on all that part. The forest is shrinking, and already for some time the narrow lane where I saw my first Seedcrackers and Crested Flycatchers has been a broad and busy highway. Recently Fairfax had been told that another road was to be driven right through his proposed sanctuary. His friends will be glad that this need no longer distress him, for it was a hard blow.

Our sympathy goes out to hes wife Monica. It was a sad Christmas for her, but a glorious one for him, if the faith that was in him is justified.

(Fairfax was elected a life member of the Society in October, 1943).

P.M.A.

BIRD NOTES FROM THE KITULO PLATEAU, TANZANIA

In October 1971 I was able to spend two days on the Kitulo Plateau in south-western Tanzania, and it is probably worth recording the birds seen in this little known area.

I was at Kitulo sheep station from 19th to 21st October, and stayed at the comfortable rest house there. The station is at about 9.05'S.,33.55'E at an altitude of about 3000m. It is on a large plateau of short, montane grassland; there is forest on the escarpments, and on the surrounding Mporoto, Rungwe and Kipengere mountains. I was primarily concerned with collecting a series of the Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana* and so explored only the grasslands. Doubtless a longer stay would have produced a lot more, and clearly the area is worthy of further investigation. Now that the sheep scheme is in operation the area is easily reached from Mbeya; 16km east of Mbeya on a very poor Great North Road is the road to Tukuyu, an excellent tarred highway; after about 13km on this, turn left at Mporoto and after about 38km on a good dirt road you reach Kitulo. One word of warning; much of south-western Tanzania, off the main roads, is a restricted area for which entry permission should be obtained from the office of the Second Vice-President. If anyone in lowland Tanzania would like to sample the bracing climate of Kitulo then they should contact the Manager of the sheep station at Box 755, Kitulo-Mbeya.

Thirty three species of bird were recorded; 8 Palearctic migrants, 11 montane endemics and 14 species of a wider distribution. In the lists that follow an asterisk indicates that specimens were collected.

PALEARCTIC MIGRANTS. Black Kite *Milvus m. migrans*, Montagu's or Pallid Harrier *Circus pygargus*, or *macrourus*, Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinus*, Common and Wood Sandpipers *Tringa hypoleucos* and *glareola*, European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*, European Swallow *Hirundo rustica* and Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe**. None of these was numerous, except that at least four Wheatears were recorded and this may well be the furthest south in Africa that this species winters in any numbers.

MONTANE SPECIES: Pink-breasted Dove *Streptopelia lugens*, Red-winged Francolin *Francolinus levaillantii*, Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana nigrescens**, Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea*, Robin Chat *Cossypha caffra*, Churring Cisticola *Cisticola njombe**, Malachite Sunbird *Nectarinia famosa**, Baglafecht Weaver *Ploceus baglafecht*, Mountain Marsh Widow Bird *Euplectes hartlaubi psammocromius**, Yellow-crowned Canary *Serinus canicollis* and Streaky Seed-eater *S. striolatus*. All of these are resident montane species, usually of grassland or forest edge, except for the Blue Swallow which is an intra-African migrant (and was first seen on 21st October).

LOWLAND SPECIES: White-backed Vulture *Gyps bengalensis*, Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax*, Augur Buzzard *Buteo rufofuscus*, Lanner *Falco biarmicus*, Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulata*, Pied Crow and White-necked Raven *Corvus albus* and *albicollis*, Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea**, Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae**, Fulleborn's Longclaw *Macronyx fulleborni*, Banded Martin *Riparia cincta*, Stonechat *Saxicola torquata**, Zitting Cisticola

*Cisticola juncidis** and Cinnamon Bracken Warbler *Bradypterus cinnamomeus**.

The large numbers of birds of prey noted was undoubtedly a result of the sheep ranching and the number of carcasses available. There were also large numbers of hares *Lepus* sp. on the short grassland. Most birds were found along the streams, which often had a low cover of bracken or other thick growth along the banks. The most numerous species in the area were probably the two larks and the pipit, the crow and the raven, a stonechat, the two cisticolas and the two canaries.

Apart from the hares the only mammals recorded were a single Common Duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia* seen, and a shrew *Crocidura occidentalis* trapped. A leopard *Panthera pardus* was reported to be killing sheep during our visit.

I am grateful to the staff of the sheep station, and to my assistants Mr A. Muchindu and Mr & Mrs T. Osborne for their help.

R.J. Dowsett,
National Museums of Zambia,
Box 498, Livingstone,
Zambia.

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SOME FRUIT BATS EAT LEAVES

Little fibrous green balls and a fresh green leaf of *Erythrina abyssinica* below a Fruit Bat feeding stance in the garden at Karen made me stop and make a closer examination of the fruit debris. How did the leaf get there? A fresh green leaf when the nearest *Erythrina* trees are some distance away and well screened by other trees from the feeding stance. Unravelling one of the green balls showed that it was made up of a series of leaf-veins and the portions of lamina between had been removed - i.e. skeleton leaves.

Having cleared the area of all debris, I returned the next morning to find fruit remnants and moist green bundles of leaf, but amongst these were some bundles or pellets still attached to the petiole and some others where only one leaflet had been consumed and the other two were whole but showing clear "U" sets of teeth marks; these clearly matching, by test with a specimen, the jaw immpression of the Fruit Bat *Rousettus (Rousettus) aegyptiacus* (Geoffroy). The leaflets and bundles were of *Erythrina*. Wandering around the garden, five further feeding stances were found simply because there was a green *Erythrina* leaf on the ground. Observations have continued for nearly a month and these leaves are found daily. This feeding on leaves is, I believe, unusual. The leaf must be plucked from the tree, carried in the mouth to the feeding stance where the rasp-like tongue gradually rasps away the lamina and in so doing the veins become rolled up until a ball is formed.

This incident is not an isolated one for when I mentioned it to Peter Hudson (Balmoral Road area of Nairobi) he examined the debris under two fruit bat feeding stances in his garden. His bats were taking loquat and he found these together with green leaf-balls and leaves of *Erythrina*. In his case the nearest tree is some considerable distance away from the feeding stance, so it is clear that this leaf-eating habit is deliberate and an even longer trip will be made to obtain leaves.

Why *Erythrina* with its rather tough, leathery leaf and very heavily felted underside? They do not look juicy or appetising compared with fruit pulp. Is it a form of roughage, the bats cannot be taking leaves because of hunger, there are plenty of fruit trees at both locations; guava, loquat and at Karen that pestilential white-flowered, green-fruited passiflor which the bats have spread all over the district.

A leaf crushed in a mortar produces very little juice. Out of interest I ground up a whole leaf which weighed 5.8g then, having no other method of expressing the juice, the crushed leaf was pressed into the barrel of an hypodermic syringe and pressure applied until the juice was expelled and the leaf reduced in volume to 4ml and a more or less dry weight of 4.22g. The extract weighed 1.58g with a volume of c. 1.25ml this was of course dark green and somewhat sticky which makes me wonder if chlorophyl is a necessary aid to digestion or does the leaf contain some specific alkaloids attractive to bats?

I contacted Dr P.J. Greenway and he replied that the red seeds are known to contain six alkaloids, these given by Watt and Breyer-Brandwijk, in "Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of South and East Africa" p.602, as erythraline, erysathiovine, erysovine, erysodine, erysopine and erysothiapine! Thanks to Dr Greenway for this information! So maybe the leaf contains one or some of the alkaloides which the bats enjoy.

Perhaps members who know of roosts or feeding stances would care to inspect and search for more data on the feeding habits and food of fruit bats. J.G. Williams in his Field Guide to the National Parks, states that these bats are found at the coast and Western Kenya and that they roost communally in caves. However, the bats are recorded from many parts of Kenya and, at least at Karen, roost in trees. The big bamboo in front of my house was a roost for many years and there are no caves to my knowledge in this area or about Balmoral Road, so searches should be made for roosts in trees as well as in caves and the feeding stances below trees.

A botanical sheet of leaf specimens showing jaw impressions and the rolled up balls has been given to Miss Allen in the library, for members in Nairobi to see.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947,
Karen.

Part I of this article appeared in the *Bulletin* January 1972.

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ROUGH - WING SWALLOW ATTACKING BAT

Mr Cunningham - van Someren's interesting note on bats in the last issue (*antea* pp. 9 - 12) reminds us of an incident which took place some time ago.

At about 1600 on 22nd May, 1969 we watched some twenty White-headed Roughwings *Psalidiprocne albiceps* hawking insects over a small dam near Siaya, Central Nyanza, Kenya. Two immatures repeatedly attacked a small black bat with approximately the same wing-span as it tried to cross the dam, a distance of about 40m. The birds were sucessful in forcing the bat virtually into the water several times during the eight or so minutes that it took to cover the distance. The exhausted creature finally dropped into *Typha* on the far shore of the dam after which it was left alone. During the performance an adult rough-wing joined the immatures but a passing Angola Swallow *Hirundo angolensis* showed no interest. This is the only time we have seen any bat flying in daylight in Kenya apart from the semi-diurnal Yellew-winged Bat *Lavia frons*.

Peter and Hazel Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala, Kenya.

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NIGHT HERON AT LAKE NAKURU

We visited Lake Nakuru on Sunday, 5th December 1971 and were driving round the west shore. At the point where the road follows the shore closely we noted a large group of Night Herons *Nycticorax nycticorax* in a clump of *Sesbania goetzei* trees on the edge of the road.

We counted 36 birds but there were others present and we estimated the total number to be nearer 50. The trees were of an open nature and sitting in the car we were within 5m. They showed no fear of us and we had an excellent view of them. It would seem unusual to see so many in one group and in such open conditions.

We noted large numbers of flamingos, ducks, darters and other birds near the mouth of the Makalia Stream on the south side of the lake but little drinking and bathing activity in the fresh water that we have observed on previous occasiens.

L.A.S. Grumbley,
Box 42011,
Nairobi.

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MARKED FLAMINGOS

The Iran Game and Fish Department are studying a breeding colony of Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber* in Lake Rezaieh Protected Region of Iran. A number of mature Flamingos were leg ringed in 1970 and in addition over 2000 juvenile Flamingo were given blue plastic collars round their necks. A further 1000 juveniles were ringed with leg rings in August 1971 and two of this batch have been recovered subsequently in Ethiopia.

As it seems possible, therefore, that some of the Iranian Flamingos are wintering on the East African Rift Valley Lakes, anyone seeing a Greater Flamingo so marked is asked to get in touch with me, mentioning date and place of sighting.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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SOME MIGRANT BIRD RECORDS FROM THE KAMPALA AREA, UGANDA

During the three seasons 1965/66 - 1967/68 I encountered near Kampala a number of Palearctic species previously unrecorded or seldom recorded from Uganda. These occurrences are listed and discussed below.

Charadrius leschenaultii Greater Sand Plover

A single bird was present in a small flock of resting waders at Entebbe airport on 25 September 1966. It was observed to be larger and greyer than accompanying Ringed Plover *C. hiaticula*, with only a trace of a dark smudge on the sides of the breast. The long, heavy bill and greenish legs were also noted.

Although this species winters commonly on the East African coast from the Red Sea south to the Cape, it is very rarely seen inland. White (1965), mentions an occurrence in Malawi, but this would appear to be the first record for Uganda and Lake Victoria.

Larus ichthaetus Great Black-headed Gull

A first summer bird, first seen on 16 April 1966 on one of the runways at Entebbe Aitport; it remained in the same area until 25 September. Details of this bird have appeared elsewhere (Pearson 1971).

Acrocephalus arundinaceus griseldis Basra Reed Warbler

Two were netted and ringed in dense lakeside bush at Gaba, 10km east of Kampala, one on 13 November 1966 and the other on 25 November 1967. Measurements (mm) were as follows:

Date	Wing	Tail	Tarsus	Weight
13.11 66	87	67	25	18.9g
25.11.67	81	63	25.5	16.9g

Both birds were in very fresh plumage, cold olivaceous above and creamy white below, with no streaks on the throat. The long slender bill was a conspicuous feature in both cases. In the first bird moult had evidently been recently completed, whilst in the second it was arrested with all feathers except the outer four primaries of each wing renewed.

This distinctive member of the Great Reed Warbler group breeds in the Euphrates and Tigris marshes of Lower Iraq. It winters, according to the literature, mainly in eastern Kenya and Tanzania and has been collected in Malawi. The above would seem to constitute its first recorded occurrence in Uganda.

Acrocephalus palustris Marsh Warbler

Five examples of this species were trapped at Gaba during the autumn of 1967, two of which were collected:

Date	Age	Notch on the inner web of the second primary		Position of 2nd p. tip relative to other p. tips
		Depth (mm)	Position relative to inner p. tips	
19.11.67	Ist W.	9	6th/7th	3rd/4th
25.11.67	Ist W.	8.5	= 7th	= 4th
25.11.67	Ist W.	9	7th/8th	3rd/4th
27.11.67	Ad	9	6th/7th	3rd/4th
2.12.67	Ad	9	= 7th	3rd/4th

The last four birds had uniform upperparts with a greenish tinge; only in the first bird was there any trace of warmth on the upper tail coverts.

In view of the difficulty of separation from the much more abundant Reed Warbler *A. scirpaceus*, over 200 of which were netted at Gaba in two seasons, some comment is called for on the above identifications. In adult (i.e. moulted) Reed and Marsh Warblers there is only a slight possibility of overlap in the second primary notch position, in the region of the tips of pp 8 and 9. Furthermore, adult Marsh Warblers are distinguishable in the hand, even from the greyest eastern Reed Warblers, by the uniform greenish tone of the upperparts. Unmoulted first year birds, or birds of uncertain age can be difficult, however. The 2nd primary notch in first winter Reed Warblers falls higher than in adults, frequently between the 8th and 9th primary tips, and occasionally as high as the tip of the 7th. In autumn, therefore, many unmoulted birds with the notch falling between the 7th and 8th p. tips are not identifiable without recourse to other characters. Plumage colour is usually helpful even in worn birds, and the relative length of the outer primaries can be useful in the identification of both young birds and adults. In Marsh Warblers, the second primary is almost always intermediate in length between the 3rd and 4th (= 3rd, 3rd/4th or = 4th), whilst it is usually shorter than (occasionally equal to) the fourth in the eastern Reed Warblers which occur in East Africa.

The Marsh Warbler is often stated to winter from Uganda and Kenya southward (e.g. Vaurie 1959, Williamson 1968). In Kenya, however, recent observations have shown that it is mainly confined to the eastern half of the country, and occurs in numbers only as a late autumn migrant. Chapin (1953) failed to record the species in the Congo, and it would also seem to be of rare occurrence in Uganda, whence there have been no recent records apart from those listed above. Despite extensive trapping, M.P.L. Fogden (*in litt.*) has no records from the Queen Elizabeth National Park. Jackson (1938) mentions only three Uganda occurrences, but since identification may have rested entirely on notch position, these must remain doubtful unless the skins concerned can be re-examined.

Sylvia nisoria Barred Warbler

This species was trapped at Entebbe and Gaba on nine occasions between late November and mid December. It was observed in the field a number of times over this period, and more occasionally from January to early April. It thus appeared to occur mainly as an autumn passage migrant, but to winter in small numbers.

Published information on the Uganda status of the Barred Warbler is somewhat contradictory. Vaurie (1959) credits it with wintering, but Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1955) imply that it is "rare or absent from the Nile Valley". Jackson (1938) mentions only a single November record from Lake Albert. It has recently occurred in both the Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls National Parks (A.P. Zeigler *in litt.*) and the observations of J.G. Rolfe and the author indicate that it is not uncommon as a passage migrant in south eastern areas.

Anthus campestris Tawny Pipit

On 4 December 1966 an unusual pale pipit was watched feeding with Yellow Wagtails *Motacilla flava* on a bare patch of ground at Entebbe. The upperparts were unstreaked sandy brown, with faint scale-like markings visible only at very close range. The underparts were whitish, with a few very faint marks on the sides of the upper breast. A prominent buffish eyestripe contrasted with a darker mark through the eye. A dark malar stripe was noted. The legs were relatively long and pale straw coloured. The tail was also long, with white outer feathers. In general appearance the bird was wagtail-like, considerably smaller and slimmer than nearby Plain-backed Pipits *A. leucophrys*. The call, when the bird was flushed, was a loud "chup". It was identified as a Tawny Pipit.

The species is stated by Vaurie (1959) to winter throughout Africa north of the equator. It reaches Somalia and the southern Sudan, but is of rare occurrence in Kenya. There seems to be no previous record from Uganda.

D.J. Pearson,
Box 30197,
Nairobi.

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NEST RECORD SCHEME - REMINDER

Will all contributors please send 1971 (and earlier) cards as soon as possible.

Hazel Britton,
Box 1102, Kisumu.

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AN ALBINO LAUGHING DOVE

While driving away from Lake Hannington on 5th January 1972, we noticed an extremely odd-looking grey and white bird by the roadside which proved to be a Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*. The whole of the head, underside and upper mantle was pure white, with wings, rump, tail, iris, bill and legs normally coloured. There is no doubt about the identification as the bird uttered the characteristic call of the species before flying away.

Peter and Hazel Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, Yala, Kenya.

LESSER FRIGATE BIRD OFF WATAMU - MIDA CREEK

On 8th January, this year, we had a splendid view of an immature Frigate Bird which we believed to be *Fregata ariel*. We were fishing some 3km off the coast between Whale Island at Mida Creek and Turtle Bay, Watamu, when the bird came overhead and followed the boat, circling us at very close quarters, probably interested in the lures which we were trailing astern. It remained with us for some five minutes and then went off to join a mixed flock of terns and gulls which were diving foe 'sardines' which were being chased by small tunny which we were following. The Frigate Bird was seen harrying the terns and gulls. A sudden nasty rain squall made further observation very difficult but the bird remained with the flock and followed them out of sight.

The Frigate Bird had a long greenish-yellow bill, pure white head and neck, white chest and belly with a dark brownish-black pectoral band. Wings extremely long and very narrow, back and tail dark brownish-black. The long forked tail was very clearly observed.

Amongst the gulls was one bird I could not identify and without glasses details could not be ascertained, but what struck us was that the bird was virtually pure white with just the tips of the longest primaries black. It could have been albinoid. Any ideas as to identity?

G.R. Cunningham van - Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

REQUEST FOR HEDGEHOGS

I am studying the Four-Toed Hedgehog *Erinaceus albiventris* and have difficulty getting enough specimens. I would be grateful if members in the Nairobi area would help by catching any that they come across and contacting me at Fort Smith 264 (day) or Kabete 415 (evening) so that I can come and collect them. I am particularly interested in diseases and parasites, but healthy hedgehogs are also wanted. They will be examined under general anaesthesia, and can be returned alive and well if the member wishes. They are very fond of chopped meat, brown bread and water.

M.W. Gregory,
A.H.I.T.I., Box 29040,
Kabete.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

KENYA MUSEUM SOCIETY

I would like to reply to Mr Cunningham - van Someren's letter which appeared in the October issue of the *Bulletin* in which he stated that the Kenya Museum Society duplicates the activities of the Natural History Society. This is not the case. The Kenya Museum Society was set up to encourage more people to take an interest in the Museums of Kenya and to help raise funds for them. This is primarily done by soliciting membership to the society and offering members a variety of activities and a quarterly journal, *Kenya Past and Present*. The activities include film shows and annual exhibits in downtown Nairobi which relate to the National Museums. We have also trained about fifty of the Kenya Museum Society members as volunteer guides to the Nairobi Museum, and this service is free to anyone who asks for it at the Museum. Hopefully, the guides will stimulate more interest in natural history through their explanations of some of the exhibits in the Museum, but on the other hand the Society does not offer nature walks nor is it planning to establish a library.

The next annual exhibit will be on the culture of the Lamu archipelago, and the last one was on Early Man. In neither of these subjects do I see a conflict with the Natural History Society's activities. As for our journal, the articles which will appear in it are general in nature and will be accompanied by many photographs; there are no academic papers in it similar to those which appear in the Natural History Society's *Journal*, nor are there short, newsy items such as those in the *Bulletin*.

Many members of the E.A.N.H.S. including the President of the Society, have joined the Kenya Museum Society in order to partake in its aims. They may find many of the activities complementary to those of the Natural History Society, but certainly not in repetition. I myself am a member of the Natural History Society and will continue my membership in both societies which, however different, draw from Kenya's heritage and can be challenging and exciting to those who want to gain more knowledge.

Dr. Esmond Bradley Martin,
Chairman of the Council,
Kenya Museum Society,
Villa Langata, Box 15510,
Nairobi, Kenya.

Sir,

AN ALBINISTIC BULBUL

On 7th November 1971, on the Ngong - Suswa road (Rift Valley, Kenya) at the foot of the escarpment, where there is a wide 'donga', my wife and I saw what appeared to be an albinistic bulbul. Its general brown-mouse colour was rather lighter than that of *Pycnonotus barbatus* in Nairobi; wing coverts and top of mantle were white, and there were white streaks in wings and tail - representing a proportion of about half white feathers to brown. It appeared to have a black cap and face over a brown head and a streaky brown chest; yellow under tail coverts.

Since making this trip - most enjoyable in many ways - to Suswa, we have been told that the occupants of a car were attacked by a 'gang' at the top of the escarpment some weeks ago. We were certainly not molested, but it would be as well to exercise caution.

K. Standish King,
Box 40058,
Nairobi.

Sir,

ADVANCE WEATHER INDICATORS

I am at last tempted to write to you and perhaps start the ball rolling on a subject of natural history which has interested me as a farmer for many years: namely, advance weather indicators. As a farmer I can sometimes take advantage of this and at times one just stands as an eye witness unable to do anything.

I will list off a few and perhaps others could write in the *Bulletin* with their experiences.

My oldest standby has always been the pair of Tropical Boubous *Laniarius ferrugineus* who live in the garden and who will always give me a day's warning on rain coming. As I can never understand peoples' written idea of a bird song, I will only say he has one call for rain and very rarely calls in any case.

The Red Hot Pokers which always give us a show in the swamps in May - June. According to the amount of flowers and date, give a good idea of the main rains and their intensity. This year we got unusual rain at Christmas and two weeks before we had a small amount of flowering.

The White Storks *Ciconia ciconia* always arrive on the farm about the 23rd November and if we are to have rain they stay eating the insects newly out. For the same reason the big Ground Hornbills *Bucorvus caffer* arrive a few days in advance of the rains, moving off as soon as the weather changes. Ordinary house flies come out about one week before the change from dry to wet weather. We have another indicator of the arrival of the main rains after the dry season which is a spring by the road which starts to flow as the incoming air increases in humidity.

Have you ever watched your flowers and grasses stand more upright a few days before rain arrives? If people are interested I would be pleased to go into each indicator in detail, one by one; but as few people live at 9000 ft,(2750m) perhaps others could give their observations from a more frequented altitude.

D. Kean - Hammerson,
Box 160,
Molo, Kenya.

Sir,

RED - CHESTED CUCKOOS

A propos Mrs Standish King's letter (*Bulletin*, January 1972, p. 17) on bird movements in Nairobi and particularly on Red-chested Cuckoos *Cuculus solitarius*, we have a record of having heard one on 29th September 1971, near our garden in Westlands, Nairobi. This followed a silence of some eight to ten weeks, the last record before that being in July. Since then we have heard them in the vicinity at irregular intervals every month and frequently during December.

Incidently, we saw a Red-chested Cuckoo in Samburu/Isiolo Game Reserve on 1st May 1971.

M.C.B. Williams,
Box 30081,
Nairobi.

RINGING NEWS

1. Please look carefully at any White Storks *Ciconia ciconia* you see: some have been ringed in Greece with coloured plastic rings in addition to the normal, numbered, metal ring. You should note the number of coloured rings, their position and, of course, their colour. Please send the information to me for forwarding.
2. The bulk of the 1970/71 ringing report has been written but I am still waiting for certain information from two foreign schemes. The report will contain some startling long distance passerine recoveries.
3. Would ringers please indicate (on the schedule) the subspecies of birds which have Palearctic and Ethiopian (or Malagasy) forms; if the race cannot be determined please say so, dont just leave blank.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003,
Kabete.

REQUEST FOR HELP

Professor Charles Sibley has been working for many years on bird egg white proteins, using them as indicators of taxonomic relationships. He is now anxious to obtain egg white samples from as many different African species as possible in continuation of his research. Recently he has been using a new electrophoretic technique (called isoelectric focusing) which is proving to be far more sensitive than his previous methods.

I realise that most members of this Society will be against egg collecting *per se* however, very often, once a nest has been found the bird will desert, a phenomenon which seems to be particularly prevalent in Africa, thus the taking of eggs from a deserted nest is quite in keeping with conservationist ideals.

Any members who feel that they might be able to help are asked to contact Prof. Sibley for advise; his address is: Director, Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut 06520, U.S.A.

Ed.

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RECORD REVIEW

Andrew Crawford Productions have brought out a most exciting record - "Wild Africa" containing sounds varying from lions' roars that make the house vibrate to the soft call of the Scops Owl, which many people must, like me, have heard for years without knowing what it was. Throughout the pleasant voice of Charles Hayes explaining and commenting. I am not sure that "breath-close" as the cover describes it, is the best position from which to record lions. We never do hear them all that close, except in a zoo, and to say so merely inclines one to suppose that many of the recordings must have been taken from captive animals. Heard from a small tent at a distance of perhaps half a mile, the roar is much more impressive and sounds less like someone trying to be violently sick. Unfortunately the feeling of being in a small tent cannot be reproduced; but it can be recalled, and the record will probably be of most value and pleasure to those who have themselves heard the sounds. However here are many sounds which few of us have had the opportunity of hearing. Not many of us have heard Rhinos fighting or lions mating (who was it said that cats are peculiar among animals in that they conceive with pain and give birth with pleasure?).

The birds are not always announced until after their calls and not always then, so that you have to hear the record several times before you really catch the sounds. But what is the use of having a record if you are not going to play it several times with something fresh to look out for each time? I myself like best the chorus of frogs with Ground Hornbills in the background; but other people might prefer the elephants enjoying themselves in a swamp, or the rolling call of the Colobus Monkeys in the forest.

This is a record we ought all to possess and give to our friends; and moreover, from the sale of each disc the publishers contribute to the funds of the E.A. Wildlife Society.

P.M.A.

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BAHARINI CAMP

The members who accepted Mr John Hopcraft's invitation to camp at Baharini Nakuru, on 8 - 9 January had a most interesting time. The camp was pitched under tall thorn trees within sight of the lake. In the evening Mr Hopcraft brought wood for a camp fire, and with the aid of a large scale map, told us something about the lake and its catchment areas, and of what the Baharini Wildlife Sanctuary is trying to do. He told us that the Nakuru National Park is the most visited Park after Nairobi, and it is amazing how the inhabitants have responded to the extra protection afforded them. Flaminges are much easier to approach now, and Reed-buck which in the old days were rarely seen, now feed in parties out in the open. The Park needs to be enlarged to make room for the larger numbers of visitors that are expected and to afford more pretection to more animals and birds.

But the Park is threatened on all sides. Peoples to the east and west have their eyes on the land, room is needed for the expansion of Nakuru town and for more roads. There is a great danger that short-sighted policies may deprive the country and indeed the whole world of this priceless heritage. Baharini Wildlife Sanctuary "has been set up as an independant non-profit making foundation, whose objects are: To protect wild birds: to conserve their habitat: to create facilities where they may be studied and enjoyed without harm or disturbance." But this project is in urgent need of funds. The additional land needed may not be available for very much longer. The World Wildlife Fund has made a grant, but this money must be repaid, as many other projects are in need of support. Anyone who can help is urged to do so.

Besides hearing about Baharini, members had a chance to watch water birds from a hide which takes you by a hidden passage right into the midst of them. Shovellers *Anas clypeata* were particularly numerous, 70 or 80 to be seen at a time. Another good place was the tree platform, whence many Night Herons *N. nycticorax* (as well as Hippo) could be seen, and a young Night Heron got us well puzzled.

Many thanks are due to Mr Hopcraft for allowing us to enjoy this camp.

Priscilla Allen,
Box 44486,
Nairobi.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held in the National Museum Hall 13th March, 1972 at 5.15 p.m. Nominations for Office Bearers & members of Committee and notices of matters to be included in the agenda should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi before 15th February, 1972.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Instead of one long expedition this month we are having two half day excursions:

Saturday 5th February, 1972: Mrs Fleur Ng'weno will lead a "Wild flower hunt" in Nairobi grassland. Meet at the Museum at 3 p.m.

Saturday 12th February, 1972: Mrs Standish King will lead a walk to look for birds at Rowallan Camp. This is part of the old Ngong Forest and many interesting birds can be seen there; but they take a good deal of looking for. Meet at the Museum at 3 p.m. and bring a picnic tea.

Monday 14th February, 1972: Mr F.M. Pinn will show us some of his slides of marine life on the Kenya reef. Mr Pinn has just written a popular guide to the marine life on the coast which will be published shortly by the Oxford University Press, and to judge from the number of enquiries that the library gets it will fulfill a real need.

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FOR SALE

LEAK STEREO 30 amplifier in perfect condition. Shs.700/- O.N.O.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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NEW MEMBERS - FEBRUARY 1972

Full Members:

P.V. Brown, Box 30260, Nairobi.
Miss Linda Cole, Box 46416, Nairobi.
B.Z. Conn, Box 34, Machakos, Kenya.
Mr & Mrs R. Daynard, Box 30521, Nairobi.
R.W. Grawe, Box 30218, Nairobi.
Dr M.D. Gwynne, Box 30362, Nairobi.
Mrs Jane Hopson, Box 30465, Nairobi.
N.D. Hunter, Box 303, Zomba, Malawi.
H. Lemming, Box 30197, Nairobi.
C.O. Merriman, Box 41500, Nairobi.
H.N. Patel, Box 41348, Nairobi.
A. Pickering, Box 18060, Nairobi.
Miss Judith Severn, Kaaga Girls High School, Private Bag, Meru.
Miss G.M. Spencer, Box 194, Kericho, Kenya.
Mr & Mrs I. Tilling, Mtare School, Box 57, Mbarara, Uganda.

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E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN MARCH 1972

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POSSIBLE POLYGAMY AMONGST TWO SPECIES OF FLYCATCHER

E.A. Armstrong in A New Dictionary of Birds (1965) mentions polygamy among Pied Flycatchers *Ficedula hypoleuca* and Collared Flycatchers *F. albicollis* in which the male birds occasionally take more than one mate, but I can find no reference to this trait among East African flycatchers. I would therefore like to record the following observations and would be interested to know if anyone else has made similar observations.

On 21st January 1972, while camping in the dry *Acacia tortilis/mellifera* bushland at the base of Longido Hill on the northern border of Tanzania, I found a nest of the Pale Flycatcher *Bradornis pallidus* about 2m up in a thorn-bush near the tent. At the time I was lying on my camp-bed in the shade of a tree, and noticed the nest because of the activity of two adult birds who were flying to the nest with insects and feeding another adult who was brooding the eggs. The performance was repeated several times while I watched, but of what sex the three birds were I could not, of course, tell. Examination of the nest with a mirror showed two eggs, pale olive-brown in colour, not as described in Mackworth-Praed & Grant. There was however no doubt of the identity of the birds. A return visit to the nest on 27th January showed no change in the situation.

A second observation was made on a nest of the White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher *Malaenornis chocolatina* in the Arusha National Park in northern Tanzania. The nest was found on 20th January 1972 some 7m up in an Acacia tree. An adult was brooding and three other adults appeared to be visiting the nest. Not then having the time to investigate properly, I returned on the 24th January and was able to confirm that three birds were feeding the one on the nest.

John S.S. Beesley,
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134, Arusha,
Tanzania.

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NOTES ON SOME BIRDS RECORDED IN SOUTH NYANZA, KENYA

The following is a list of records made in the southern part of South Nyanza District between 1968 and 1971 while stationed at Rapogi Secondary School, 64km south west of Kisii. The area appears to be little known ornithologically and it is felt that as much of the habitat is undergoing rapid changes some records of birds most affected might be of interest.

Rapogi is surrounded by open scrub with an increasing amount of shamba-land and with some thickets along the banks of small streams. In some places further afield there are isolated patches of gallery forest e.g. along the Mundiri and Kuja Rivers. A considerable amount of forest was cleared along the Kuja in the 'Fifties for tsetse control. However, what is changing much of the habitat at present is the increasing amount of land clearance as the population in the area increases. Inevitably the thickets along the streams are being cut.

SOME BIRDS OF INTEREST AFFECTED BY THE HABITAT CHANGES

These birds were only recorded in streamside thickets or gallery forest and as some of them are often associated with true forest environments it will be interesting to see how they will adapt to the changes in their habitat. (*signifies that specimens have been collected for the National Museum, Nairobi.)

SPECIES	LOCALITY	COMMENT
**Chlorocichla flavicollis* . . .	almost any thicket	common
**Phyllastrephus fischeri* . . .	Rapogi, Mundiri R. Pala (Kuja R.) . . .	common in large thickets & gallery forest
* *Cossypha polioptera*	Rapogi, Pala, Taranganya	common round Rapogi.
* *Cossypha natalensis*	Taranganya	one adult & juv.
* *Cossypha niveicapilla*	Rapogi	from two localities
* *Lonchura poensis*	Gogo Falls, Rapogi	only recorded once at each locality.
* *Spermophaga ruficapilla* . . .	Rapogi, Taranganya, Pala . . .	uncommon.

Co-ordinates of localities:

Rapogi	0.54'S., 34.28'E.
Mundiri River	1.07'S., 34.38'E.
Taranganya	1.14'S., 34.36'E.
Pala	0.48'S., 34.26'E.
Gogo Falls	0.54'S., 34.21'E.

SOME BIRDS OF DISTRIBUTIONAL INTEREST

The following is a list of birds recorded in S. Nyanza that are on the edge of their distributional range or outside it altogether as described in Mackworth-Praed & Grant.

**Tmetothylacus tenellus*	- one pair seen in dry scrub near Macalder Mine (0.58'S., 34.17'E.) on 22.9.69.
**Chlorocichla laetissima*	- a flock in gallery forest along the Mundiri River on 25.5.69
**Andropardus virens*	- a pair netted at Rapogi in a thicket on 11.4.70.

Prinia leucopogon – common in suitable habitats.

**Nectarinia chloropygia* – recorded from Rapogi and Pale on the margins of stream thickets.

**Cisticola woosnami* – first seen 8.12.69 on a rocky hillside near Rapogi where they were apparently resident. They were only seen in this one locality. On 5.6.71 three pairs were seen and they were very vocal. Their plain backs and red heads were very obvious in the field. One of the pair cocked its tail and rapidly beat its wings while its mate looked on. On 3.11.71 another group was seen in a similar habitat on Wire Hill, near Oyugis (0.28'S.,34.43'E.) where they appear to be common.

Micheal and Gwyneth Sugg,
Agoro Sare High School,
P.O. Oyugis, Kenya.

BIRD WALK TO ROWALLAN CAMP

The bird walk at Rowallan Camp organised for us by Mrs Standish King on 12th February, was a very pleasant occasion. Dr. John Cooper supplemented it by showing us fascinating insects which particularly interested a group of students from our Institutional Member Kenton College, whom we were glad to have with us.

As we should expect from the number of large insects that we saw, Shrikes were particularly common. The Boubou Shrike *Laniarius ferrugineus* was calling the whole time and was seen as well. Puff-backs *Dryoscopus cubla* were very much excited and one member managed to see one actually displaying. The Grey Cuckoo-Shrike *Coracina caesia* was also seen.

The forest was full of sound. The Yellow-whiskered Greenbuls *Andropadus latirostris* carried on their endless conservations accompanied by *Camaroptera brachyura* and *Apalis flavida*. Rüppel's Robin-chat *Cossypha semirufa* sang a bewildering song imitating cuckoos and bee-eaters. I for one was quite taken in and was only surprised that it did not sing "Waltzing Matilda" which a band was diligently practicing on the nearby show-ground.

Priscilla Allen,
Box 44486,
Nairobi.

WANTED

Someone to translate four scientific papers on zebra behaviour from German to English. Can be translate into a tape recorder. Small remuneration offered. Please contact: Miss C. Moss. Tel. Nairobi 60053.

A NOTE ON BLACK-HEADED GULLS IN DAR ES SALAAM

Mackworth-Praed & Grant and Williams' 1969 Field Guide do not mention any records of Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* in East Africa although they are known to winter in the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea basin and the Ethiopian lakes. There are only two published Kenya records (Smart 1952, Deane 1971) but to my knowledge there is not a single record from Tanzania. It is of particular interest therefore that there should be a flock of well over 500 within a mile of the centre of Dar es Salaam at the time of writing, 15th February 1972.

The first birds, a small flock of 14 in first winter plumage, appeared during the last few days of December 1971. The numbers have built up steadily since then to the present 550 plus. The great majority of the birds are in first winter plumage although a few adults in winter plumage have been noted. In flight, the first winter birds show a distinct wing pattern with white outer primaries tipped with black, a broad blackish brown subterminal band on the secondaries and a brownish bar running from the carpal joint along the greater wing coverts to the scapulars. The rest of the wing and the mantle is grey with a variable amount of brownish flecking and the tail is white with a brownish black terminal band. The head and underparts are white with a dusky grey ear mark. On some birds there are dusky grey crown markings also. The bill is dull red with a dark tip and the feet and toes bright red. At rest the birds look pale white and grey and it is only when flying that they show themselves clearly as subadults.

Unfortunately the only local gulls present for comparison are Lesser Black-backed *Larus fuscus* and Sooty Gulls *L. hemprichii* which are both considerably larger and heavier. The Black-headed Gulls have a more buoyant tern like flight and a higher pitched call. At rest they often stand with necks drawn into shoulders.

Most of the flock feed along the Msimbazi Creek and in the tidal pools of its estuary. At low tide they tend to be scattered, but as the tide rises they collect into flocks on the sandbanks and preen. At high tide they usually swim off shore in loose flocks. Msimbazi is undoubtedly the headquarters of the flock but I have seen parties well into Dar es Salaam harbour and up the coast as far north as Kunduchi. Here they consort with flocks of Lesser Crested *Sterna bengalensis* and Swift Terns *S. bergii* and will follow the *ngalawas* (outrigger canoes) apparently to pick up discarded fish. After rain or in the heat of the afternoon they often fly high over the middle of Dar es Salaam.

It is interesting that what is apparently the first recorded occurrence of the species in Dar es Salaam should involve such a large and noticeable flock. During the last six weeks the winds have been predominantly from the N.E. and unseasonably strong. This flock may have drifted from their more usual winter quarters in the Persian Gulf on these winds.

A series of photographs is with the National Museum in Nairobi.

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100, Dar es Salaam,
Tnazania.

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REVIEW

Two sympatric canaries, *Serinus koliensis* and *S. citrinelloides*, in Western Kenya. Britton, Peter L. 1971. *The Auk* 88:911 - 914.

This interesting paper gives information on two canaries which Peter Britton has studied in Central Nyanza, the Papyrus Canary *S. koliensis* and the western Kenya race of the African Citril *S. citrinelloides brittoni.* These two finches are very similar in appearance and this paper gives a wealth of biological data which shows the difference between the two species most clearly.

Britton demonstrates that *S. koliensis* is a bird of papyrus (although leaving the swamps on occasion for feeding) and has, justifiably suggested that the English name of the bird should be the Papyrus Canary (*E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* February 1971 p.26).

The recently described race *brittoni* of the African Citril is found in *shambas*, forest edge and even dry Acacia savannah in Western Kenya. Although both species are very similar in appearance their songs, nests, eggs and habitats differ. The birds also differ significantly in size (weight and wing length).

It is refreshing to note that Peter Britton's paper is the only one in this issue of *The Auk* other than a couple of half page notes, which was not supported by a research grant. The days of the amateur are not quite over, at least in the old world.

G.C.B.

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BLACK-HEADED GULLS OFF KENYA COAST

I think the pale gull-like bird that Mr Cunningham - van Someren saw off Watamu on 7th January is the European Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus.*

While on E.A.M.F.R.O. Research Vessel "Manihine" a Black-headed Gull was flying close around the ship while the trawl was being hauled in Malindi Bay. The bird was feeding on trash fish and I was able to get very good views of it with binoculars.

The bird was conspicuously pale, and at close range the red bill and legs, black ear patch and large white forewing wedge were quite obvious. The black tipped primaries could also quite easily be seen.

Subsequently, I saw flocks of 20 - 30 birds off Ras Ngomeni on 8th January 1972 and more around Lamu on 10th and 11th January. On 22nd January 1972 I saw two at Shimoni and have since seen them regularly in Mombasa Harbour and the beaches around Mombasa, but have not seen them further than 3km out at sea.

N. Bruce,
Box 81651, Mombasa.
Kenya.

REVIEW

Report on Bird Ringing for 1969. Spencer, R. *Brit. Birds* 64:137 - 186.

This well-compiled report is, in many ways, depressing reading. Basically because of lack of funds, the British Ringing Office (a section of the British Trust for Ornithology) has had to discourage ringers from ringing certain birds which yield very large numbers of recoveries; recoveries cost money to process and some of these costs have had to be passed on to the ringers in the form of greatly increased ring prices. The effect of this policy has been to reduce the number of birds ringed in 1969 to 501400, the lowest annual total since 1964.

The use of tables summarising recoveries is to be welcomed - we had been promised these in earlier reports and Bob Spencer and his staff are to be congratulated on clearing the backlog so promptly. Over 260 recoveries are given in full in the accepted form, however ringers' names are omitted, no doubt a source of annoyance to many hard-working ringers but a move dictated by the need to save space.

Mr Spencer defends the view that startling recoveries should be published in full and with this the reviewer would agree; as Spencer points out, what is startling today may prove to be commonplace in years to come.

British ringers are beginning to get long distance recoveries of passerines (apart from Swallows *Hirundo rustica,* which have, for years been recovered in South Africa in some numbers); those of great interest are: Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* to Ghana (5.55'N.) and Senegal (16.01'N.) and Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* to no less than 32.42'S. in South Africa.

The Report on Bird Ringing for 1969 is a typical British compromise between the extremes of the national reports which are exemplified by the Finnish and the Dutch reports: the Finnish report for 1966 (I. Sten, 1968. Die Vogelberingung in Finnland in Jahre 1966 *Mem. Soc. Fauna et Flora Fennica* 44: 54 - 215) runs to 161 pages, lists 3249 recoveries in full (of which 1442 are abroad) although 'only' 136860 birds were ringed in that year. At the other extreme, the latest Dutch report (B.J. Speek 1969. Ringverslag van het vogeltrekstation Nr.53 (1968) *Limosa* 42:82 - 109) manages only 27 pages, lists 18 recoveries which are plotted on two maps (but without full details), 3104 other recoveries are tabulated without indicating place or date of ringing or date of recovery. The number of birds ringed in 1968 was 145253. It can be argued that the Finnish report is too detailed but, without doubt the Dutch one is not detailed enough. It is to be hoped that the British Scheme can find more money so that fuller reports can be produced in future.

G.C.B.

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LAKE NAIVASHA OBSERVATIONS

On a visit to Lake Naivasha on 30th and 31st December 1971, I noticed the following things which I thought worth recording, although they may be well known to people who live nearby.

1. I noticed a number of large rodents, which appeared to be cane rats, *Thryonomys* sp., in the lakeside vegetation in the early morning. They were either swimming in the water or clambering over the vegetation nearby. This habitat agrees well with that given by Dorst and Dandelot, "reedbeds and thickets along marshes or lakes" and their behaviour agrees with the comment "They swim easily". However Williams does not mention wet habitats for the only species given, *T. swinderianus*, and also comments "terrestrial" although it is not clear whether this means "not found in water" or "does not climb trees".

   Also Williams does not mention any cane rat in his list of mammals found at Lake Naivasha and Hell's Gate. I have never seen this species on previous visits to Lake Naivasha, so it would be interesting to know whether it has been introduced or whether the numbers have increased. Also it should be possible to decide which of the two species, *T. swinderainus* or *T. gregorianus* is involved.

2. I saw a peculiarly marked Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata*, in the lagoon between Crescent Island and the mainland. The crown and much of the upperparts were white or whitish, apparently symmetrically, the edges of these areas merging to the usual black. It may be a well known form, but I have never seen anything like it before either in this species or in the Palearctic *F. atra*.

3. I noticed some Grey Woodpeckers *Mesopicos goertae*, near the Lake Naivasha Hotel. I am familiar with the species as it is probably the commonest woodpecker in many Kampala gardens, so I was surprised to notice that the Naivasha birds differ from the Kampala birds in two respects. Firstly, the Naivasha birds clearly feed to a considerable extent on the ground, in this case the artificially watered "lawn" in front of the hotel. However I have not yet seen a Grey Woodpecker on the ground in or near Kampala; of course the habitats are different so the species would be expected to make different use of them, but there is certainly no shortage of ants on the lawns of gardens in Kampala. Secondly, the calls of the species in the two areas are, in my experience, consistently different. The Naivasha birds' call was an excited "keek, keek", whereas those in Kampala call with a short quickly repeated nasal trill which is very distinctive.

   Mackworth-Praed and Grant consider that different subspecies occur in the two areas, *M.g. rhodeogaster* at Naivasha and *M.g. centralis* in Kampala. The call is not described for *rhodeogaster*, but the description of the call of *centralis* as "A loud cheerful 'birri-birri-birri' rather shrill and excitable with a repeated metallic 'clink' in it" would seem to agree with mine of the Kampala birds. They also mention frequent drumming for *rhodeogaster*, but this is something I have never heard near Kampala.

4. Williams does not record any species of lovebird *Agapornis*, for Lake Naivasha and Hell's Gate. However I saw several parties of Fischer's Lovebird *A. fischeri* and a single Yellow-collared Lovebird *A. personata*. Both species would be well outside their normal range in seperate areas in Tanzania (Moreau), so presumably they must have been escapes. These are actually the two species which have been introduced into areas on the East African coast, *fischeri* to the Tanga region and *personata* to Dar es Salaam (Mackworth-Praed & Grant).

Roger Frankum,
Kibuli Secondary School,
Box 4216, Kampala,
Uganda.

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Moreau, R.E. (1948) Aspects of evolution in the parrot genus *Agapornis*. *Ibis* 90:206-239.
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EXCEPTIONAL BIRD ACTIVITY AT KOROGWE, TANZANIA

In most years we get a good many migrants at Korogwe when they are travelling northward, but very few in the October to December season when they are going south. In 1971 there was a quite exceptional visitation in November and early December. There was a prolonged drought and most of the birds I saw came towards the end of the drought, and when the drought was broken by a big thunderstorm on 19th December they all disappeared and have not been seen since. On the other hand, the flocks of Swallows of several species that usually stay here disappeared completely for the period of the drought and reappeared once the rain started. Some of the birds were probably only local migrants, and come and go without any set plan so far as I can see.

It is difficult to tell what element in the set of conditions caused the unusual movement, but I am wondering whether it meant that the birds were moving in towards permanent water. If the coastal area was completely dried up the birds might have come down the Luengera valley which forms a corridor from the coast to the Luvu River. Or again, they might have come in from Handeni area when all surface water disappeared; I have no evidence either way. I imagine that small birds must drink dew very largely, if so they would have to seek water when conditions became so dry that no dew was formed.

My observations are as follows:

22.10.71. Black Cuckoo Shrike *Campephaga phoenicea* male.
20.11.71. Seen in the same bushes for a couple of days each time, (previously noted in the same bushes on 20.9.70.).

2.11.71. Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata.* There is usually one solitary bird here for the whole season.

18.11.71. Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus.* It stayed about a week. I saw it twice, but unfortunately both times without binoculars so I cannot tell which race. (Previously I saw one on 18.12.70., either a female or juvenile.)

20.11.71. Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus.* One adult and two juveniles. These stayed for two or three weeks. They have been seen here before, but I do not seem to have kept a note of the dates.

20.11.71. Red-necked Falcon *Falco chiquera* immature.

13.12.71. Red-necked Falcon adult. Each seen once only. I have never seen them before.

20.11.71. Madagascar Bee-eaters *Merops superciliosus*, a flock of about twelve. Not seen here before.

20.11.71. Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudata* a juvenile which stayed around for a week or so.

21.12.71. Two adult Lilac-breasted Rollers (one previously seen 22.11.70).

21.11.71. Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* one male, one female (commonly seen here in March, but not at this time of year).

21.11.71. Black and White Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus* several of these were about, most of them disappeared quite soon but one was seen drinking at bird bath 28.11.71. and stayed in the garden a long time. Last noted on 22.12.71. A few of these come here sometimes but I have not seen so many together before.

23.11.71. Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* a male, (usual in March or April but not now).

28.11.71. Yellow White-eyes *Zosterops senegalensis* I saw only two of them. Seen in this garden once before some years ago, but I have not traced the date.

28.11.71. There seemed to be a mixed flock of shrikes which I had difficulty in identifying.

a. Black-headed Bush Shrike *Tchagra senegala* Several of these stayed for some days, three stripes on head and very dull grey underneath. Never seen before.

b. Pale-chestnut tailed Shrike *Lanius cristatus.* Dull brownish birds with pale chestnut rump and tail with lightish tips to tail, two birds. Never seen before.

c. Three-streaked Bush Shrike *Tchagra jamesi* I only saw this once and could not get a good view of its back. It had a very pale, almost white front and bright chestnut wings. It had three black stripes on its head with white between but with a buff, almost chestnut, wash on the sides of the head. Clearly a juvenile bird. Never seen before.

8.12.71. Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus.* A pair of these came to have a look, stayed about 15 minutes and flew off back towards the river. Never seen before.

16.12.71. Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus.* A brief visit for water. These have paid us a visit a few times in past years.

19.12.71. This was the day of the thunderstorm which ended the drought, I went out after it was over and saw the following.

a. Long-crested Hawk Eagle *Lophoaetus occipitalis* this bird was bedraggled after the storm and appeared to be juvenile. Its crest was poor and its tail short. Seen here sometimes.

b. Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brevicaudata*. This was a really dark grey, apart from the green wings. It had a conspicuous white patch on its under-tail coverts which I could not find mentioned in any of the descriptions. Never seen before.

c. Black-headed Bush Shrike *T. senegala* a few were still present.

d. African Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus boeticatus* this is, I think, a resident bird though I do not often see them. It was sitting on top of a bush singing.

20.12.71. Brimstone Canaries *Serinus sulphuratus*. Two or three pairs in the valley, conspicuously bigger than our resident canaries *S. mozambicus*.

After this there has been nothing here except the Swallows and our common local residents.

I have been living at Korogwe since 1947 and have a check list of about 130 birds, so it is definitely surprising to add eight new species in so short a period.

Mary.E. Archbold,
Box 533, Korogwe,
Tanzania.

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A NESTING COLONY OF BLACK-HEADED HERONS *ARDEA MELANOCEPHALA* IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA

On 12th December 1971 I was shown a colony of Black-headed Herons in the Burka Coffee Estate, about 8km west of Arusha. The manager, Mr. H. Bucher, kindly gave me permission to make observations whenever I wished.

The colony is only five years old and started with about ten nests. Apparently the numbers fluctuated, as in 1969 there were only ten nests again, although higher numbers of pairs had bred in the intervening years. In 1971 I counted 107 nests.

The nests are built in a few *Albiziz anthelmintica* trees surrounding a spring-fed pool which in turn is surrounded by tree-shaded coffee plantation, a small wood of *Acacia xanthophloea* and a patch of *Lantana* bush. Beyond these immediate environs are open fields of ley, wheat, beans and rough grazing. The adult birds feed on these fields and in the mown grass-surrounds of the local airport and a nearby permenent swamp.

Of the 107 complete nests, 95 appeared to be occupied, and an additional five to eight were still being built. They were placed at heights varying between 7 - 15m but mostly above 10m in the trees closest to the pool. The allocation of nests to trees was as follows; 37 in 2 trees, 35 in 1 tree, 22 in 1 tree, 6 in 1 tree, 5 in 1 tree and 2 in 1 tree.

The development of the young was not exactly synchronised, but they were mainly just over three-quarters grown and these had a vinous flush on the chest. A few fledglings were seen about the banks of the pool, a few nestlings were half-grown, and a few parents were brooding either eggs or very small nestlings and as mentioned, some nests were still being built.

The number of nestlings per nest varied, two or three could be seen in many and one nest appeared to hold four, but they may have been in two nests very close together.

The weather during the nesting time was as follows: October - warm and dry with very light showers on six days. November - first half as October, second half with heavy showers during the last ten days. December - first half hot and dry, second half cloudy and warm with a few light and heavy showers. This was very much the same pattern of the previous year.

John S.S. Beesley,
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134, Arusha,
Tanzania.

A SECOND FRIGATE-BIRD OFF WATAMU

On 13th January 1972, in conversation, Peter Lindstom mentioned that on 9th January 1972 while fishing off the "banks", a point some miles out to sea more or less off Casuarina Point, south of Malindi, he and his companion had a fine view of an adult Frigate-bird *Fregata* sp. which circled their boat and trailing baits for several minutes at close range.

Photographs were taken and Mr. Lindstom stated that if these were any good he would make them available for close examination.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

AERIAL MATING OF SWIFTS

David Lack (Swifts in a Tower, 1956, p40 - 46) gives a detailed account of the aerial coition of the Common Swift *Apus apus*. He also quotes numerous other references from Gilbert White onwards but states that normally the birds mate in their nesting holes. Do African species of Swift mate in flight?

On 10th April 1968, I was fortunate to see what I assume to be aerial mating of Swifts at Muguga, Kenya, but it is difficult to see enough detail of two small, high flying birds to be certain. I should be glad to hear of confirmatory observations.

A large flock of Swifts, mainly White-rumped Swifts *Apus caffer* were flying round a storm cloud over Muguga, but included a few much larger, all black, swifts with slightly pale chins and forked tails. The larger birds were flying above and behind the main flock and much less busily than the White-rumped Swifts. Their flight includud short periods of gliding with quivering wings, as described by Lack. While I was watching, two birds closed in mid-air and fell, quite slowly, fluttoring one on the back of the other. The pair dropped, I estimated, about 200m until they were only some 10m above the roof of my house, when they separated and flew off together and out of sight.

While these large Swifts appear over Muguga several times a year, I have never been able to identify them with certainty. It seems probable that they are *Apus niansae*.

W.G. Dyson,
E.A.A.F.R.O., Muguga,
Box 30148, Nairobi.

Sir,

BIRDS AND CITRUS

In the August 1971 issue of the *Bulletin* you ask for information about birds and citrus. While it is a long way from East Africa and even further from the Seychelles, there is a list of birds from citrus orchards in the Eastern Cape in "The Birds of Amanzi", *S. Afr. Avifauna Series*, 34, 1966, by C.K. & P.N.F. Niven.

J.M. Winterbottom,
Percy Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology,
University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, C.P.

Sir,

As usual I have read with great interest October 1971 *Bulletin E.A.N.H.S.*

1. Breeding of *Merops albicollis* in Kenya, most interesting, but is there definite evidence that there is a RESIDENT population? There is, I believe a breeding record from the dim past from N.E. Uganda. The true breeding ground of this bee-eater I understand is Mauretania, N.W. Africa, but I have not handy Etchécopar's reference work.
2. With reference to Vesey-Fitzgerald's early record of *Merops apiaster* could he have mistaken *M. superciliosus* for *M. apiaster*. I have known *M. apiaster* over Entebbe unusually early in the latter part of August.
3. BLACK CARACAL I have checked Uganda Game Department Annual Reports: in 1947 Black Caracals - adults and kittens, were recorded from Kangole (near Moroto), Karamoja, Eastern Uganda: also, in latter part 1946, Sydney Zoo (Taronga Park) Expedition to Uganda collected live half-grown black specimen and black kittens in the same locality, where evidently a melanistic strain is permanent: recorded again from same locality 1954/5.

4. BLACK CIVET CAT In 1947, Uganda Game Department was sent skin, skull and skeleton of a black Civet cat (all this material is in the Uganda Museum) from the outskirts of Budongo Forest, Bunyoro.

5. BLACK SERVAL When white settlement was first developing the Trans Nzoia District of Kenya (S.E. of Mt. Elgon), in 1920 - 25 period, Black Servals were abundant, but were ruthlessly persecuted for their handsome skins. By 1925 there were virtually none left. They still occur in Uganda on the northern foothills of Mt. Elgon. In 1957/8 , Black Serval was recorded from South Ankole, S.W. Uganda.

6. I am sending the E.A. Nest Record Scheme my data on nesting of *Lanius mackinnoni* in S.W. Uganda and the nesting of *Cossypha niveicapilla* and *Chlorocichla flaviventris* at Entebbe, all these of which I have many records.

C.R.S. Pitman,
Leicester Court Hotel,
41 Queen's Gate Gardens,
London SW7 5NB.

Sir,

RED-WING STARLINGS AND KLIPSPRINGERS

I refer to the letter in the November 1971 *Bulletin* regarding the above; similar behaviour was in fact observed by me in September 1960 and recorded in the *Journal* of January 1963 (at page 75).

It may be significant that both notes refer to the same locality, although at an interval of over ten years.

H.J. Lee,
42 Crofton Road,
Ipswich, Suffolk,
England.

Sir,

I was interested in the note on the association between antelopes and baboons by Dr. Leuthold in the December *Bulletin*, having noted additional associations of baboons with bush Duiker in central Tanzania and with bush-buck in the Arusha National Park.

In the Arusha National Park it is difficult to see what the baboons gain, for as Dr. Leuthold states, it is the baboons who first sight possible danger. Perhaps in the forests the bush-buck scent danger earlier if the wind is in the right direction. Whether the bush-buck eat fruit or leaves dropped by the baboons is difficult to ascertain and some of the feeding by these two animals while in association is done in open, sparsely tree'd country.

Conversely, the baboons occasionally kill and eat young bush-buck. Mr Morgan-Davies tells me that he observed similar happenings in Manyara National Park with impala and Mr Stephen Ellis noted the killing of Thompson's gazelle by baboons on several occasions while he was in charge of the Nairobi National Park. However, this phenomenon must be fairly rare or recent as these associations would not continue.

While writing, may I express my agreement with Mr V. Simpson's suggestion that some bird skins should be dried with one wing out as the difficulty in extending the wings in many museum specimens is considerable.

John S.S. Beesley,
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134, Arusha,
Tanzania.

SECRETARY"S NOTICES

IMPORTANT: By the time you receive this *Bulletin*, all those who have not yet paid their subscriptions for 1972 should have received a letter from the Secretary. This is the last *Bulletin* which will be sent to those who have not paid, a journal will be sent with the April issue.

THE LAKE BARINGO LODGE.

As many of you will remember, the Society booked two weekends at this Lodge last year which were a great success with the members who were able to attend. We are to have two weekends again in June this year, and this is the preliminary notice for those who might be interested. The arrangement is that the Society takes over the Lodge for two nights, accomadation will cost sh.120/- plus sh.10/- (to cover the Society's expenses in arranging it) per head. The Lodge holds 20 people (10 double rooms) and we have booked it for the weekends of 10th/11th June and 24th/25th June. PLEASE NOTE 2 NIGHTS. In the April *Bulletin* there will be a form to be filled in by those wishing to attend, but if you wish, please write to the Secretary and book a place now.

Secretary.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 13th March: The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held in the National Museum Hall at 5.15 p.m. This will be followed by a talk by Mr L.H. Brown on the White Pelican. His illustrated slide lecture should prove to be very interesting and members are urged to attend.

Saturday - Sunday 18th-19th March: By kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Barclay, there will be a camp on the far side of Menengai Crater. Washing water will be available, but drinking water will have to be brought. Please meet Miss P.M. Allen at the Stag's Head Hotel in Nakuru at 3.30 p.m. on the 18th. For those who can leave early, or will be late, please contact Miss Allen at the Library of the National Museum and obtain a map of the camp.

PLEASE NOTE: Wednesday morning bird walks will now meet at the National Museum at 8.45 a.m.

THURSDAY - 2nd March: Illustrated talk on Mount Kenya and Mount Kilimanjaro by Mr D.K. Jones, to be held in the Kisumu 'British Council' building, by kind permission of Mr Perret, at 7.15 p.m. All are welcome.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Britton, P.L. 1971, On the apparent movements of *Cossypha natalensis*. *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 91:137.

Brooke, R.K. 1971. The eastern and southern populations of the Mottled Spinetail. *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 91:134.

Brooke, R.K. & Hodgson, C.J. 1971. Winter food of the Secretary Bird as revealed by pellets. *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 91:121.

Cheke, R.A. 1971. Temperature rhythms in African montane birds. *Ibis* 113:500.

Cunningham - van Someren, G.R. 1971. *Euplectes diadematus* Fischer & Reichenow; Courtship, nest and eggs. *Bull. Br. Orn Club*.91:119.

" " " " 1971. *Amadina fasciata* (Gmelin) as a "nest parasite". *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 91:135.

Delany, M.J. 1971. The biology of small rodents in Mayamja Forest, Uganda. *J. Zool.* 165:85.

Dennis, R.W.G. 1971. A Leafspot of *Phyllanthus* in Kenya. *Kew Bull.* 26:45.

Douthwaite, R.J. 1971. Treatment of fish by the Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*. *Ibis* 113:526.

Edmunds, M. 1971. Opisthobranchiate Mollusca from Tanzania (Suborder: Doridacea). *Zool. J. Linn. Soc.* 50:339.

Field, W.D. 1971. Butterflies of the genus *Vanessa* and of the resurrected genera *Bassaris* and *Cynthia* (Lepidoptera:Nymphalidae). *Smithsonian Contribution to Zoology*. No.84.

Fossey, D. 1971. More years with Mountain Gorillas. *National Geographic*, Vol.140, p. 574.

Ghauri, M.S.K. 1971. New species of *Lygidolon* Reuter (Hemiptera-Heteroptera: Miridae) infesting wattle in South and East Africa. *J. Ent.(B)* 40:133.

Green, J. 1971. Associations of *Cladocera* in the zooplankton of the lake sources of the White Nile. *J. Zool.* 165:373.

Hayes, A.H. 1971. A revision of the African Genus *Phylloxiphia* Rothschild & Jordan (Lepidoptera:Sphingidae). *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat.Hist.) Entom.* 26:229.

Jones, D.A. 1971. The systematics and ecology of some sand beach Isopods (Crustacea:Eurydidae) from the coast of Kenya. *J. Zool.* 165:201.

Hutson, A.M. 1971. New species of the *Ornithomya biloba* - group and records of other Hippoboscidae (Diptera) from Africa. *J. Ent.(B)* 40:139.

Kabue, C.H.S. 1971. A new species of *Eragrostis* Wolf (Gramineae) from East Africa. *Kew Bull.* 26:83.

King, F.W. & Brazaitis P. 1971. Species identification of commercial crocodilian skins. *Zoologica N.Y.* 56:15.

Mabberley, D.J. 1971. The Dendrosenecios of the Cherangani Hills. *Kew Bull.* 26:33.

Menon, P.G.& Williamson, D.I. 1971. Decapod Crustacea from the International Indian Ocean Expedition. The species of *Thalassocaris* (Caricae) and their larvae. *J. Zool.* 165:27.

Meyburg, B-U, 1971. On the question of the incubation period of the Black Kite *Milvus migrans*. *Ibis* 113:530.

Sevastopulo, D.G. 1971. Sphingidae (Lep.) - East versus West Africa. *Proc. Brit. ent. nat. Hist. Soc.* 4:79.

Van Someren, V.G.L. 1971. Revisional notes on African *Charaxes* (Lepidoptera Nymphalidae) Pt. 7. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Entom.* 26:183.

Whalley, P.E.S. 1971. The Thyrididae (Lepidoptera) of Africa and its islands. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Entom.* Suppl.17.

Wickens, G.E. 1971. The *Combretum psidiodes* complex (Combretaceae). *Kew Bull.* 26:37.

Root, J. & A. 1971. Mzima, Kenya's spring of life. *National Geographic*, Vol.140, p.350.

BOOKS RECENTLY ADDED TO THE LIBRARY

Bristowe, W.S. - The world of spiders (New Naturalist Series) London, Collins.1958. Given By Mr Clifton.

Geilinger, W. - Der Kilimandjaro: sein Land und Seine Menschen. Bern/Berlin, Hans Huber, (1930). Given by Mr Gillett.

German Africa Society - Museums in Africa: a directory. Bonn, German Africa Society, 1970. Given by Publishers.

Hedberg, I. & O. (eds.) - Conservation of vegetation in Africa South of the Sahara. Proceedings of a Symposium. Uppsala, 1968. Given by the Authors.

Loupekine, I.S. - A catalogue of felt earthquakes in Kenya, 1892 - 1969. University of Nairobi, Seismology Dept. 1971. Given by the Author.

Mackworth-Praed, C.W. & Grant, C.H.B. - Birds of West Central and Western Africa. Vol.I. London, Longmans, 1970. Given by Mr Mackworth-Praed.

McLachlan, G.R. & Liversidge, R. (eds.) - Roberts' Birds of South Africa. 3rd. ed. Cape Town, Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, 1970.

Mandersloot, G. - Firozkohi: een Afghans reisjournal. Rotterdam Museum voor Land en Volkenkunde, 1971. Given by Rotterdam Museum.

Mannering, Eva (ed.) - Mr Gould's Tropical Birds: comprising twenty four plates selected from John Gould's folios together with descriptions of the birds taken from his original text, edited and introduced. London, Ariel Press, 1955. Given by Mr G.C. Low.

Misra, K.S. - The fauna of India and adjacent countries: Pisces. 2nd.ed. Calcutta Zool. Survey of India. 1969. Given by the Publishers.

Monti, Franco - African masks. (Cameo Series) London, Hamlyn, 1969. Given by P.M. Allen.

National Geographic Society - Research Reports. . . 1965. Washington, 1971. Given by the Publishers.

Sampson, C.G. - The Smithfield industrial complex: further field studies. National Museum, Bloemfontein, Memoir No.5. Given by the Museum Bloemfontein.
Schaller, G.B. - The year of the Gorilla. Penguin Books, 1967 Given by P.M. Allen.
Slimming, D. & Jarrett, A. - The Cowries of the Seychelles. London, Phillips, (1970) Given by Mr Tony Carter.
Van Lawick-Goodall, Hugo & Jane - Innocent killers. London, Collins. 1970. Given by the Wildlife Clubs.

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Members are reminded that except when the Librarian is on holiday, the Library is open until 6 p.m. on Mondays to give those who work an opportunity to visit it.

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NEW MEMBERS - MARCH

Life Members:

Mr Cyril Beecher, Ngambo ya Bahari, Westmoors, Wimborne Minster, Dorset.
Dr D.L. Ebbels, Box 1433, Mwanza, Tanzania.
Mr D.A. Kruelen, S.R.I., Box 3134, Arusha, Tanzania.

Full Members:

Mr R. Albon, Box 30035, Nairobi.
Miss L.R. Baldwin, Box 43412, Nairobi.
Mr D.P. Carthy, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr V.J.W. Collins, Box 30214, Nairobi.
Mr E.G. Curtis, Box 44462, Nairobi.
Dr P. Duffus, Vet. Res. Lab., P.O. Kabete.
Mr A.C. Jackson, Box 1433, Mwanza, Tanzania.
Mr R.P.N. Mennell, Box 28, Naivasha, Kenya.
Mr M.N.H. Milne, Box 1912, Kisumu, Kenya.
Mr J.B. Newbould , Box 49089, Nairobi.
Miss E.S. Paton, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Miss P. Plumtree, Box 40111, Nairobi.
Mr J.J. Ruparel, Box 10993, Nairobi.
Mr F.R. Rush, Box 30047, Nairobi.
Mr R. Smith, Box 1971, Kisumu, Kenya.
Mrs M.C. Wilkinson, Box 159, Limuru, Kenya.
Mr B.D. Wright, Box 48033, Nairobi.

Junior Members:

John Fulmer, Box 46082, Nairobi.
Ali Lallani, Box 44770, Nairobi.
Peter Rush, Box 30047, Nairobi.
Also 36 Junior Members from Hospital Hill School, Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin.* The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN APRIL 1972

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SHARPE'S STARLING *CINNYRICINCLUS SHARPII*

IN SOUTHERN TANZANIA

John Beesley (*E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1972:12 - 13) gives a very interesting account of Sharpe's Starling in the Arusha area of northern Tanzania. In October 1971 I was pleased to be able to observe this species on Mount Rungwe in south-western Tanzania. This is the most southerly locality for Sharpe's Starling and is some 500km from the next locality to the north, Kungwe-Mahari, although as far as I know no one has ever suggested any geographical variation in the species. Rungwe is the only place in the Tanganyika - Nyasa montane group where this starling occurs, although it is not clear why it is apparently absent from several other suitable forests in the area.

During our stay on Rungwe from 21st October to 1st November we saw several Sharpe's Starlings, usually singly, sometimes in twos. The single birds were usually males at their song-posts. The "squeaky" song has been well described by Sessions (1967) *Jl E. Afr. nat. hist. Soc.* 26(1):18 - 48 and in addition males often uttered a clear "peoo, peoo" from a perch. Two adult males collected had enlarged gonads, although an adult female did not. A juvenile collected on 29th October had incomplete skull-ossification, and was in company with an adult and was perhaps a couple of months out of the nest. These few records suggest that in the Rungwe area breeding is in the late dry season and early rains. Similarly Beesley's records and those quoted by Mackworth-Praed & Grant suggest that in northern Tanzania breeding is also prior to the main rains, which are about two months later than in the south. A similar situation exists with the savanna Amethyst (= Violet-backed) Starling *C. leucogaster* in Zambia (Benson *et al.* (1971) The Birds of Zambia).

Most of the birds we saw were on the edge of forest or in isolated clumps of trees in grassland. In shape and flight they were much like Amethyst Starlings, although they have a much shorter bill. They are so similar to the Amethyst, notably in having streaky-breasted juveniles, that I am sure that modern authors such as Hall & Moreau (1970) Atlas of speciation in African Passerine Birds are right in merging the genus *Pholia* in *Cinnyricinclus*. On the other hand, Hall & Moreau doubt if Amethyst and Sharpe's should be considered members of the same superspecies, and I think they are right to be cautious, especially in view of the great differences between the females of the two species. In the Amethyst the female is streaked below much like the juvenile, but the female Sharpe's differs from the male only in having the belly and under-tail coverts less rich orange. I suspect that the starlings of the genus *Cinnyricinclus* (confined to Africa and parts of Arabia) may be related to some of the starlings of the genus *Aplonis* of the Oriental region, although this possibility was mentioned neither by Hall & Moreau nor by Peter's Check List of the Birds of the World. It may be that *Cinnyricinclus* are fairly recent colonisers of Africa from the Orient, in particular the migratory, savanna Amethyst Starling.

Sessions (*op. cit.*) suggested that the juvenile Sharpe's might have a greyer back than the adult, but our juvenile specimen is merely less irridescent above, and lacked, of course, the bright canary yellow iris.

Weights of our two adult male specimens were 42.5 and 45.0g and of the adult female 47.0g. These are very similar to weights of 22 Amethyst Starlings handled in southern Zambia in January, which averaged 42.5g, range 38.0 - 47.5g.

Sharpe's Starling appears not to be very specialised nor to have any obvious competitors, and so it is surprising that south of Kungwe and the Usambaras it should occur only on Rungwe. It might be expected in forests such as on the Ulugurus, Uzungwa, Livingstone Mts. or Ufipa, and although these areas have been explored thoroughly by Heinrich, Loveridge, myself and others it is quite possible that Sharpe's Starling has been overlooked in some places.

I am most grateful to my companions on Mount Rungwe, Mr A. Muchindu and Mr & Mrs T. Osborne, for their assistance.

R.J. Dowsett,
National Museums of Zambia,
Box 498, Livingstone,
Zambia.

REVIEWS

SOME COMMON FLOWERING PLANTS OF UGANDA by E.M. Lind & A.C. Tallantire, 2nd Edition, O.U.P. Nairobi 1972 ('1971'), pp. 259, fig. 159, price in East Africa sh.15/-

This is by far the best available moderately priced introduction to herbaceous plants, excluding grasses and ferns, not only for Uganda but also for Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and the eastern Congo. The second edition is the same as the first, of which 5000 copies were sold from 1962 to 1970, except for minor additions and corrections and the omission of the coloured plates - which has enabled the price actually to be reduced. The authors and publishers are greatly to be congratulated on keeping available at so moderate a price a work which should be regarded as essential to every teacher of biology and to every student of botany in East Africa.

J.B.G.

EAST AFRICAN WEEDS AND THEIR CONTROL by G.W. Ivens, 3rd Edition, O.U.P. Nairobi, 1972 ('1971') pp.250, fig. 112, price in East Africa sh.15/-

The value of this book is shown by the exhaustion between 1967 and 1971 of the first two editions. While essential to those who have to struggle against weeds it is also valuable to anyone who wishes to know something of the appearance, biology and effect upon agriculture of some 220 of our commonest plants. The third edition differs from the first and second in the correction of some minor errors, the inclusion of information about some new weed killers and the addition of 251 vernacular names.

J.B.G.

LIFE HISTORIES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN LYCAENID BUTTERFLIES by Gowan C. Clark and C.G.C. Dickson, Purnell, Cape Town, 272 pages, 125 plates in colour, price R.15.00.

The authors have spent some forty years investigating the life histories of South African butterflies, many of which were recorded in painstakingly accurate and detailed paintings of great beauty by the late Gowan Clark. Those dealing with the Papilionidae, Pieridae, Danaidae, Satyridae and Acraeidae were published in the first three volumes of the late Dr G. van Son's very fine work (The Butterflies of Southern Africa, Transvaal Museum, 1949, 1955 & 1963). Clark's paintings of the life histories of the Nymphalidae (*sensu stricto*) and of the Hesperidae are still unpublished and it is to be hoped that one day they will appear in a volume as well produced as the present one.

The work under review covers 125 species from a total of over 200 Lyeacinids so far recorded from the Union of South Africa. Only those species of which the life histories are included are mentioned and therefore the book is not meant to be a monograph of the South African species. The text was written by Dickson. The original combination and references are given for each species, followed by its dimensions, food plants, flight season, geographical distribution, by a description of the early stages, an account of the parasites and notes on habitat and behaviour. Dickson also describes the adult and early stages of a new species of Copper *Lycaena clarki* which had for a long time been confused with the common Cape species *L. orus* (Cramer); figures and descriptions of the life histories are also given for two previously undescribed *Aloeides*, but no names are proposed. An excellent bibliography completes the work.

South Africa is purely a political entity and has no zoogeographic significance. Even the Southern African Subregion (Africa south of the Zambesi and Cunene rivers), used for convenience by so many authors, has little meaning. However, the southern and western parts of this area, including the Cape Province and the coastal areas of South-West Africa as well as the montane areas in the east form a very distinctive zoogeographic unit of great interest and of little affinity with tropical Africa. It is here that most of the numerous endemic elements of the South African flora and fauna are concentrated, including about 90 species of Lycaenids and some 40 Satyrids. It is fortunate that this endemic element is so well represented in the book under review, since such information will eventually help us better to understand the origins of this very isolated and puzzling southern fauna.

The book is well produced, but the plates have lost something of the brilliance of Clark's original paintings, possibly through being printed on mat paper rather than on art paper, presumably an unavoidable economy. It is a monument to the industry and patience of the authors, two of the grand old men of African entomology and it is sad that Gowan Clark did not live to see the results of his labours reproduced in this beautiful work.

This is a book which will be of great value to all serious Lepidopterists and indispensable to students of the *Lycaenidae* or of the African butterfly fauna.

R.H.C.

FLORA OF TROPICAL EAST AFRICA, Leguminosae (Parts 1 & 2), Papilionideae (1) and (2). Published on behalf of the East African Community by the Crown Agents for the Overseas Governmants and Administrations, The Government Bookshop, P.O. Box 569, London SE1 9NH. Both priced £3.60.

On 14th December 1971, the publication of this very large and important family was completed by the issue in two parts of the Papilionoideae Nos. 1 and 2. The previous parts, Mimosaceae by J.P.M. Brennan appeared on 29th May 1959, price sh.12/- and Ca Caesalpiniaceae, also by the same author, was published on 1st May 1967, price £1.8. The Part 1 of the Papilionoideae contains 601 pages with 72 text figures but no Index, Part 2, also Papilionoideae with pages 503 - 1108 and the complete Index of 28 pages and text figures. The authors are J.B. Gillett, R.M. Polhill and B. Verdcourt.

This has been a very big task, the family in East Africa contains 102 genera, the two most important being *Indigofera* with 145 species and *Crotalaria* with 199 species.

The Papilioncideae has many economically important species, from timber trees, medicinal and food plants such as beans, grains, grams, cover crops and green manures, fodder and forage plants. This flora has a series of keys covering tribes, genera and species which should help one to name any species. Under each species the distribution is given under the political divisions of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania as well as its distribution in adjacent countries followed by its habitat.

Each species is very fully described and synonyms are given as well. The 155 figures are mostly full page line drawings of individual species by a series of artists as well as reproductions from the Institute National pour l'Etude Agronomique de Congo through the courtesy of the Director General.

The three authors and the artists who co-operated in producing this flora are to be congratulated. We now have the Leguminosae to hand which should enable us to name any species we might meet with when studying the flora of East Africa.

P.J.G.

A Review of BIRDS OF ZAMBIA by C.W. Benson *et al.*, published by Collins, London, will appear in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

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NEST RECORD SCHEME - RECORDS FOR 1971

Although the majority of contributors have already sent me their records for last year, there are still several members who have not yet sent in cards. Would those contributors be kind enough to send their records as soon as possible.

Mrs Hazel Britton,
Box 1102, Kisumu.

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HOSPITAL HILL SCHOOL JUNIOR MEMBERS

A year ago a Junior "club" of the East Africa Natural History Society was established at Hospital Hill School, Nairobi, and soon had more than 100 Junior Members of the Society.

Under the guidance of Miss Jamini Vincent, a teacher at the school, the group organised their own film shows and field trips.

During 1971, all members took field trips within the school grounds, discovering plants and animals from lichens to harmless snakes. In the last term, every pupil in Standard Six had the opportunity for a field trip on the Museum's Nature Trail, in guided groups of five or six. Regular film shows were held throughout the year thanks to the services of the Museum's Education Section.

The group is actively continuing this year. If anyone is interested in running a similar programme at their school, please get in touch with me.

Fleur Ng'weno,
Box 42271, Nairobi.

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SOUTH NYANZA BIRDS - IN ENGLISH

I have received some complaints about the ommission of English names for the birds in "Notes on some birds recorded in South Nyanza." by M & G Sugg *antea* 1971:38 - 40. The English names were left out for reasons of space and aesthetics. They are as follows:

Chlorocichla flavicollis - - - - - - Yellow-throated Leaflove
Phyllastrephus fischeri - - - - - - Fischer's Greenbul
Cossypha polioptera - - - - - - - - Grey-winged Robin Chat
Cossypha natalensis - - - - - - - - Red-capped Robin Chat
Cossypha niveicapilla - - - - - - - Snowy-headed Robin Chat
Conchura poensis - - - - - - - - - - Black & White Mannikin
Spermophaga ruficapilla - - - - - - Red-headed Bluebill
Tmetothylacus tenellus - - - - - - - Golden Pipit
Chlorocichla laetissima - - - - - - Joyful Greenbul
Andropardus virens - - - - - - - - - Little Greenbul
Prinia leucopogon - - - - - - - - - White-chinned Prinia
Nectarinia chloropygia - - - - - - - Olive-bellied Sunbird
Cisticola woosnami - - - - - - - - - Trilling Cisticola

Editor.

ILLUSTRATED TALK BY LESLIE BROWN ON PELICANS

The proceedings of our A.G.M. are reported on another page. Following it we listened to a fascinating talk by Mr Leslie Brown on the breeding of Great White Pelicans *Pelicanus onocrotalus* illustrated with beautiful slides. Without trying to summarise the lecture, some points which particularly interested one listener may be put down.

The Great White Pelican is one of the largest and heaviest birds that fly and has a wing span of up to 10ft. (3m). The wings are built like those of an albatross (with a long humerus and short manus, unlike those of a gull) so that when the wings are folded the black primaries are hidden and the bird looks wholly white. The males are larger than the females. At the beginning of the breeding cycle the birds develop knobs on their foreheads, yellow in the male and orange in the female, and these shrink as breeding proceeds. They also develop a dark reddish stain on the chest and underparts. This is much darker and more extensive in birds breeding in Ethiopia than in Kenya birds. A visitor from Ethiopia might well suppose that he was not seeing any breeding birds here. We can well understand how the legend arose of the Pelican "in her piety" feeding her young on blood from her own breast. Not only is the stain on the breast the colour of dried blood, but the tip of the bill is bright red like fresh blood. It is mystifying that this should be a stain and not the natural colouration of the feathers. Why only in the breeding season? and why is it so much darker in Ethiopia?

Great White Pelicans breed on the ground in large colonies, in contrast to the Pink-backed Pelican *P. rufescens* which builds in small colonies in trees. They are extremely shy when breeding and value privacy above everything, even at the price of flying many miles to feed. The most minute precautions must be taken by any observer or they are liable to desert. Ringing of young birds has so far been impossible and we do not know where they go when they finally disperse. The colonies most intensively studied by Mr Leslie Brown are those at Lake Shala in Ethiopia and at Elmenteita in Kenya where a colony flourished for a few years and then ended in a mass desertion for which no adequate cause has been found. But though they seek privacy from human and other interference, they seem to value the company of their fellows to such an extent that they incubate with their bodies actually touching and do not even demand that pecking distance which other colonial nesters establish. The start of the colony at Elmenteita seems to have been much encouraged by the presence of a breeding colony of Flamingoes . The Pelicans nested alonside them and eventually pushed them out altogether. Both parents share in incubation and there are often long periods (up to 72 hours) of waiting before a sitting bird is relieved. During this time they seem to be able to hold food undigested in the crop and feed on it at intervals. The pouch on the bill serves to carry not only food but nesting material. The young are fed by regurgitation, at first on liquid material trickling down grooves in the upper mandible while the head is held nearly upside down. Later the young bird puts its head right down the parent's throat, (unlike Herons which put their bills down the chicks' throat). The young seem very like young cormorants of a larger size, black, naked at first and then covered with velvety black down.

They grow no feathers until they are nearly as big as their parents. Some photographed were huge with only a few feathers starting to grow in the middle of their backs. This is their heaviest and fattest time. They walk about the neighbourhood of the nesting colony in groups or "pods", and seem at that age to recognise their parents, though earlier it is the parents who recognise them.

A very ancient species, the life histories of these intriguing birds are full of mysteries and unsolved problems. We are indeed fortunate in having Leslie Brown in the Society, so that at intervals, we can hear more about them.

P.M.A.

P.M.A.

GROUND HORNBILLS IN NAIROBI

I was on holiday in Nairobi with my parents over Christmas 1971; I am a keen bird watcher and I am quite well acquainted with the birds of Kenya. On Thursday 6th January 1972, I went into the garden of our house, which is at Kenton College and overlooks some of the fields there, to sit in the sun. I noticed when I got outside that there was an odd humming, thumping noise coming from the field in front of the house. The noise was rather like two beats of a very unusual drum repeated again and again at intervals of about two seconds.

On investigation of this odd noise, I saw two Ground Hornbills *Bucorvus cafer* strutting about pecking at the short grass of the playing field. I was most excited for the only other time I had seen these birds was at Kibwezi on the way to Mombasa a few years ago. I am fortunate in having a good camera and this I used to obtain three pictures which, unfortunately, cannot be published with this article. The first picture was taken at a long distance in order that I should have a picture even if I later frightened the birds away. I got much closer however, and with my camera at the ready, caught the bird in flight just as it took off. It flew up into a nearby gum tree where I got a good clear photograph of it.

The two birds stayed for the whole day returning to peck at the grass later in the afternoon. However, they did not come the next day.

Presumably the birds were after some insect or something they liked in the grass. It is interesting to note that the day was fine, but there had been heavy rain the previous day.

S.J. Stagg,
Newick House,
Sandford Road,
Cheltenham,
Glos., England.

A PARTIAL ALBINO YELLOW WAGTAIL

On 22nd March 1972 my wife and I caught an adult female Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava lutea* at Kabete. The bird had the right side of its forehead white and white feathers on the nape and greater coverts. I have handled many thousands of this species but this is the first to be encountered showing albinism.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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ALBINISM IN A SUPERB STARLING AND A TOPI

While staying at George Dove's 'Ndutu Safari Lodge' on the Serengeti, I was able to see two examples of albinism in the vicinity of the lodge.

An albinistic Superb Starling *Spreo superbus* had been seen in the area for over a year before I saw it in September 1971. I was able to observe it for some time and it appeared as if almost all the feathers which are normally blue were white. This left the bird mottled green and white with the belly rufous - chestnut and the breast band indiscernable.

A female Topi *Damaliscus korrigum* had a white 'blaze' and had been seen in the vicinity since late 1967 or early 1968. In 1970 ahe had a calf which, although taken by predators within its first year, appeared normally coloured. Her 1971 calf was just starting to change colour when I left the area.

Both moved around with their fellows with no apparent discrimination due to their different colour.

Gerald Rilling,
c/o G. Dove Safaris,
Box 284, Arusha,
Tanzania.

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SLEEPY SEEDEATER

Our bird table at Kabete consists of an old door laid horizontally across the corner of the verandah. On 27th February 1972 at 07.30h (a cold and misty morning) I looked through the window to see whether there was enough seed on the table - there was, but below the table, on the floor of the verandah I noticed a Streaky Seedeater *Serinus striolatus* asleep. I watched it for perhaps a minute then opened the front door which caused the birds on the table to fly away, but the sleeping bird remained where it was with its head tucked 'under its wing'. I picked it up (when, of course it awoke) ringed, weighed and measured it. On release it flew away strongly.

As mentioned above, the morning was cold (*c*.5.C), damp and misty; I suspect the bird was simply having a 'lie in', although in an unusual place. It was not underweight and did not appear sick.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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EAST AFRICAN FRIGATE BIRDS

The recent sightings of Frigate Birds *Fregata* spp. off the East African coast (*E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1971:168, 185 - 186, 199, 207 - 208; 1972:30, 48) suggest that a note on their identification would be welcome. Of the five species currently recognised, three occur in the Indian Ocean, but one is, so far, only known from the vicinity of Christmas Island - that is *F. andrewsi* and need not concern us (see *E.A.N.H.S. Bull.* 1971:207). The other two, the Lesser *F. ariel* and Greater *F. minor*, breed on some of the oceanic islands in the western Indian Ocean, with Aldabra in the Mozambique Channel the nearest breeding station to East Africa. Frigate Birds tend to stay close to their breeding grounds, but do wander on occasion and it these wanderers that are seen off the coasts of Kenya and Tanzania.

Frigate Birds are unmistakable in the field, with their enormously long black wings (wingspan over 2m), long hooked beak and long forked tail. The positive identification of species is, however, not so simple, and most young cannot be identified to species. Size is an unreliable guide as there is some overlap between the species. The following points may be useful.

ALL BLACK: male Great (*minor*)

ALL BLACK with a WHITE PATCH on side of body at base of wing: male Lesser (*ariel*)

ALL BLACK, throat and foreneck GREYISH WHITE, breast and sides WHITE, NO REDDISH COLLAR on hind neck: female Great (*minor*)

As female Great, but less white below, and a REDDISH COLLAR on hind neck: female Lesser (*ariel*)

DULLER and BROWNER, with WHITE HEAD and UNDERPARTS: immatures.

On these criteria then, it is obvious that the only positively identified East African Frigate Bird is that collected by M.W. Ridley at Kipini on 31st August 1951 - it is a Greater, *Fregata minor*. It should be possible to identify the species from good photographs of adults.

A.D. Forbes-Watson,
National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

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CASPIAN PLOVER *CHARADRIUS ASIATICUS* AT THE COAST

It may be interesting to note several very large flocks of Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus* on the beach at Kilifi, Kenya. On 8th March 1972, I visited the seaward beach north of Kilifi Creek and noticed large flocks of plovers (perhaps 1000 or more), which puzzled me at first as Caspian Plovers are, by all accounts, birds of "grassy plains inland" such as the Athi Plain.

I returned on 11th March, after having read all the available descriptions in Praed & Grant and Jackson, and after a while was lucky enough to hear once again the piping whistle as large numbers of birds flew in. On this occasion I was able to get quite close to them and with the sun behind me the beautiful rich chestnut breast with a narrow black border, white face and white superciliary stripe and white underparts showed up clearly, a lot of the birds were in full breeding dress.

They appeared to rest awhile on the white coral sand and did not run about feeding as most of the other waders were doing along the tide line.

Lise Campbell,
Box 14469,
Nairobi.

DO YOU KNOW THAT :-

the Chromatogaster ants which build the paper covered nests high up in trees, often thought to be birds' nests, have a very fast reaction to the defence of the colony. These nests which are common towards the coast, and can easily be seen in the Sokoke Forest near Malindi, look like lumps of mud high up on a branch. When the nest is attacked, the ants pour out, the first ones gripping the edge of the neast and the ones following gripping hold of their fellows. This forms a living chain about 2cm wide, and forms so fast that, from a nest 10m up in a tree, the ants reach the ground in about 20 seconds. As soon as the first ants touch something moving the message is passed up the chain, and the whole column drops down on their attacker. As their bite is more painful than that of the Safari Ant, it is unwise to disturb one of these nests.

the *Acraea* butterflies, the slim-winged creatures which are often orange in colour and have transparent patches on the wings, that one can easily see flying slowly over the grass, have a form of chastity belt that the male places on the female. After the male has completed pairing with the female, he produces a solution similar to shellac which he places over the opening to the genitalia so that the female is unable to pair again. Occasionally the male does not remove his claspers from the female's body before the secretion has set, resulting in his genitalia becoming embedded in the female. This fact was only recently discovered at the National Museum in Nairobi, and is thought to occur in about 5 per cent of cases.

the first air to ground missile was a mosquito. The female mosquito homes in on the heat given out by the body and the carbon dioxide in the breath. They have special receptors on the antennae which enable them to do this. The discovery of this fact helped in the development of air to ground missiles. The male mosquito, or gnat, does not possess these receptors as it feeds on nectar alone, but has on its antennae thin hairs which are tuned to the sound of the female's wings to enable him to find her for pairing.

there are approximately 640000 described species of insects in the world, and more continue to be described at the rate of 6000 per year. It is thought that there will be 2000000 described species finally. At present, the beetles (Coleoptera) are the largest group with 250000 described species. Usually, in any given locality there are 20000 species.

the *Charaxes* butterflies are the fastest flying butterflies in the world, and have been clocked at 45 miles per hour (72.4 km/h). The speed, and height, at which they fly enable many species to escape from predators. On the leading edge of the forewing are many hard spines, which are used for fighting off rivals, the males for contesting for female favours, and both sexes for driving off other butterflies from prized pieces of dung or oozing sap from trees which are their only food.

This is the first in a series of articles on general insect behaviour. It is hoped that members will enjoy them, and I would like to have your comments.

M.P. Clifton,
Entomologist,
The National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

A. G. M. 1972

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on 13th March 1972 in the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. The President reported upon the past year's activities which showed the Society to be in a healthy state.

The new Executive Committee were elected *nem. con.* and their names are printed on the back cover of this issue.

The meeting was followed by an illustrated talk by L.H. Brown which is mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

Ed.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

BAT POLLINATION

Further to my two notes on pollination by bats, we had much pleasure in finding that the *Kigelia* on our coast plot at Watamu was also bat-pollinated. The tree was in full flower over Christmas and fallen flowers showed the unmistakable signs of bat-claw marks. The first evening a mist net set in front of the tree took six bats. It was full moon on 30th December and a stealthy visit to the tree in the evening was rewarding, as the bats could be seen flitting up to the flowers and clinging to them as shown in my drawing (*E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1972:11).

On 25th January I visited the Pemba Channel Fishing Club at Shimoni to see my son, who was camped under a large Baobab tree and, to our delight, the tree was in flower. Fallen flowers showed clear bat claw marks. We marked a large bud and this opened as expected during the late evening or night. At 05.30 hours we collected the flower - all petals showed bat claw marks.

The notes have started the "ball rolling" and I have had several most interesting letters, one from Aberdeen from Anthony Start who later sent me a long list of references, nineteen in all, concerning bat pollination. A copy of this will be sent to the Library. Anthony Start has just graduated B.Sc. from Aberdeen and has left for Malaysia to work for his Ph.D. His paper on Pollination of Baobabs by *Rousettus aegyptiacus* on the Coast" appears in the *East African Wildlife Journal*.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

Sir,

BLACK HEADED GULLS

I was interested to read in the March *Bulletin* pp. 41 & 42 of the presence of unprecedented numbers of Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* on the coasts of Tanzania and Kenya. The descriptions given, however, make no mention of bill or head shape, and provide no indication as to why the birds concerned might not be Slender-billed Gulls *L. genei*. Small numbers of the latter species have appeared inland in Kenya and eastern Uganda this autumn and winter, and any small gulls of 'Black-headed' type seen in East Africa should be carefully examined.

The Slender-billed Gull is easily distinguished in summer plumage, but closely resembles the Black-headed in winter, when both have a white head with a greyish mark behind the eye. The two species are similar in size, wing pattern, shade of the upperparts and bill and leg colour. Slender-billed is best recognised by its long neck -- a feature often conspicuous at rest as well as in flight -- and its head shape. The bill is longer and altogether larger than in Black-headed, and this, together with a rather flat forehead, gives the head an attenuated appearance. In head and neck proportions, the Slender-billed Gull thus resembles the Grey-headed Gull *L. cirrocephalus* and the Sooty Gull *L. hemprichii* more closely than does the Black-headed.

It seems suggestive that by mid-February, as far as can be gathered, no none of the Dar es Salaam gulls had a dark or partially dark head. In Britain, Black-headed Gulls usually begin to moult into summer plumage during late January or February, and there seems no reason why birds of more eastern origin should be very much later. A bird seen near Entebbe on 18th March 1971 (R. Frankum *in litt.*) was in full summer plumage If any of the Dar flock are still present, their identity should by now be easy to establish.

D.J. Pearson,
Box 30197,
Nairobi.

Sir,

IDENTIFICATION OF BIRD

I refer to the Rev. Peter Hamel's request for help in identifying a bird seen in the Impenetrable Forest, Uganda (*E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1971:204; 1972:18).

He has given a good description of the distinctive Ruwenzori race *atriceps* of the Abyssinian Hill-Babbler *Alcippe abyssinica*. Mackworth-Praed & Grant list it as No.740, *Pseudoalcippe abyssinicus*.

A.D. Forbes-Watson,
National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 10th April, 1972: There will be a members' slide show in the National Museum Hall at 5.15 p.m. Please bring about a dozen slides. In addition, members are asked to bring any natural history specimens which can be exhibited on the tables provided.

Saturday, 15th April 1972: Miss P.M. Allen will lead a bird-walk. Please meet at the National Museum, Nairobi at 2.30 p.m. and bring a picnic tea.

Sunday, 23rd April 1972: Mr J.B. Gillett of the E.A. Herbarium will lead a field trip to the Magadi Road area where an interesting succession of vegetation can be observed. Please meet at the National Museum, Nairobi at 8.30 am. or at 10.00 a.m. at the first gorge after the turn-off to the Ngong Circular Road. Please bring enough petrol and water, lunch and plant presses and plastic bags for those interending to collect.

Monday, 10th May 1972: John Cooper will give an illustrated talk on Harrier Hawks in the Nat. Mus. Hall, Nairobi at 5.15 p.m.

Sunday, 14th May 1972: Peter Britton will take a party to the heronry on the Kano Plains near Kisumu. Members should meet at km 8 (from Kisumu) at 7.30 a.m.: those coming from the direction of Nairobi will find it convenient to camp on Saturday at the following place: turn off the main road from Nairobi at km 54 from Kisumu at the junction of C 35 to Muhoroni; take the second road, which is murram (the first road is tarmac). The camp will be *c.* 100m along this road on the left. Although a long way from the heronry, this is the nearest suitable, more or less unpopulated area, and there are interesting birds in the vicinity. There will be an early start on the 14th and the trip will last until the early afternoon at least. In May the heronry area is likely to be inundated and a walk of several kilometres will probably be necessary. Bring rubber boots and be prepared for ahot day. Those wishing to camp are requested to inform Mr Britton at Box 1102, Kisumu; please state whether you will have somebody who can watch the camp on the Sunday. Campers should be self-contained, including drinking water.

(Friday), Saturday - Sunday, (4th), 5th - 6th August 1972: There will be a camp at Ngobit, by kind invitation of Mr Carnegie. Full details will be given later.

Saturday - Sunday, 16th - 17th September 1972: There will be a camp on the slopes of Mt. Kenya in the forest belt. Details later.

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NEW MEMBERS - APRIL

Life Members:

Dr E.B. Martin, Villa Langata, Box 15510, Nairobi.

Miss R.M. Osborn, Kenya National Parks, Box 42076, Nairobi.

Full Members:

Mr Alan P.L. Binks, Box 20224, Nairobi.

Mr & Mrs R. Campbell, Box 24779, Nairobi.

Mrs M. Carswell, Dept. of Surgery, Box 7051, Kampala, Uganda.

Mr M. Cremers, Egerton College, P.O. Njoro, Kenya.

Dr F. Fasana, Box 14182, Nairobi.

Mr Daniel Freeman, c/o A.D. Forbes-Watson, Box 40658, Nairobi.

Mr G. Griffin, Box 591, Nakuru, Kenya.

Miss F. Hinawy, Box 30035, Nairobi.

Mr M.E. Hopper, Box 30465, Nairobi.

Full Members contd.:

Mr I. Johnston, Box 48541, Nairobi.
Mr D. McDonald, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr W.J.F. Rutherford, Box 30241, Nairobi.
Mr D.M. Sindiyo, Box 40241, Nairobi.
Mr A.G. Virjee, Box 41837, Nairobi.

Junior Members:

There are 13 Junior Members from the Hospital Hill School, Nairobi.

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MATERIAL FOR THE BULLETIN

At the time of writing I have no matter at all in hand for the next issue. Please send contributions, bearing in mind the Notice to Contributors which is now printed inside the front cover.

Contributors should also try to follow conventions of style used in the *Bulletin*, e.g. dates are expressed "1st April" not "1 April" or "April 1st" or "April 1".

Contributors whose handwriting is barely legible are asked (if they are unable to type) to print out "difficult" words. Thank you.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5 × 23 cm (10 × 8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5 × 23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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SOME NOTES ON *MARSILEA* IN EAST AFRICA

The aquatic fern genus *Marsilea* is well known largely because of the familiar and primarily European species *M. quadrifolia*. Few local naturalists are aware that several species of these very interesting plants are quite common in East Africa. Recent discoveries suggest that East Africa may be one of the richest areas in the world in species of *Marsilea*.

All species are so similar vegetatively that an illustration of any one (Fig.1,A) serves to represent the genus as a whole. All have creeping rhizomes to which are attached leaves (fronds) with four leaflets (pinnae) clustered at the end of a long, slender petiole (stipe). In any one species however, characters such as leaflet size, shape and degree of toothing of the margin are so variable that sterile plants are rarely sufficiently distinctive to be identified to species.

The biology of all the species is very similar. All are clearly adapted to habitats which are periodically flooded but are neither constantly wet nor constantly dry. The most common habitats are seasonal pools and pans, intermittent and generally slow- flowing streams and the edges of permanent rivers, dams and lakes where the water level has seasonal fluctuations.

The plants are quite capable of enduring extended periods of either flooding or drought. Under the former conditions they continue to grow vegetatively. As the water level begins to drop and the plants are stranded on the mud or sand, they start producing hard, seed-like structures called sporocarps. These contain the spore-producing sporangia and are capable of surviving long dry seasons. When the rains come again and the habitat is inundated, the sporocarps split open and sexual reproduction occurs. The new plants thus produced continue vegetative growth until the water level drops again.

Marsilea species are generally described as semi-aquatic, but I believe seasonal aquatic would be a better term.

Sporocarps are almost always essential for the identification of *Marsilea* specimens. They are attached singly or in clusters either to the rhizome or to the petiole, and the structure and arrangement of the sporocarps is characteristic for each species (Fig.1, B-F). In some species the sporocarps are buried in the mud and can easily be overlooked.

Recently the African and Madagascan species of *Marsilea* have been monographed by Launert (1968). Twenty one species were recognised of which nine were recorded from East Africa. Recent collections have extended the distribution of some species and have yielded two new species from Kenya which have been described by Launert (1970, 1971). Three further species recently collected in Tsavo National Park East may also prove to be new, at least for East Africa, when they are studied in detail.

The distributions of described species of *Marsilea* in East Africa can be summarized as follows: Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (*M. gibba*, *M. macrocarpa*, *M. minuta*); Kenya and Tanzania only (*M. coromandeliana*, *M. farinosa*); Kenya only (*M. distorta*, *M. nubica*, *M. subterranea*).

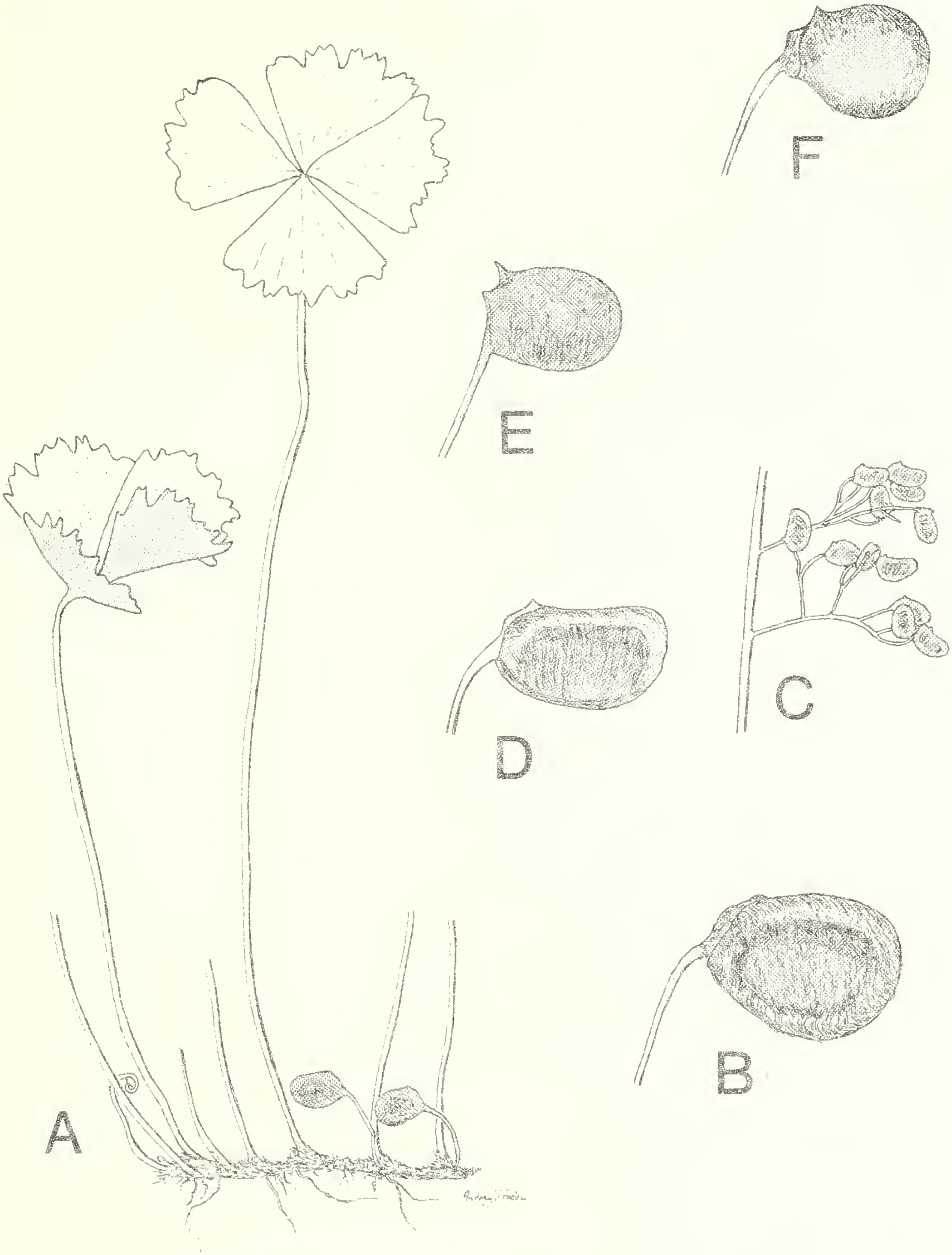

Fig. 1. A, B, *Marsilea macrocarpa*: A, habit (X1), B, sporocarp (X5); C, D, *M. botryocarpa*: C, clusters of sporocarps attached to the petiole (X1), D, sporocarp (X5); E, *M. minuta*: sporocarp (X5); F, *M. gibba*: sporocarp (X5).

Although the distribution of *Marsilea*, a genus of approximately 65 species, is cosmopolitan, two areas particularly rich in species have been recognised, Australia and South Africa (Copeland, 1947). Launert (1968) records 10 species from South Africa and 10 species from South West Africa. It is clear that East Africa with 12-14 species and particularly Kenya with 9-11 species and Tanzania with 8 species must also be considered areas rich in *Marsilea* species.

It is worth noting that both species recently described from Kenya have come from seasonal water-holes in particularly dry areas. Many interesting records have also come from similar habitats in Tsavo National Park East. It is expected that when further such habitats are investigated, especially in the dry northern area of Kenya, additional new species will be discovered. Persons visiting these areas are requested to collect *Marsilea* when it is encountered. Terrestrial plants with sporocarps can be pressed while the sterile aquatic stages (if only these are found) can be sent living in a polythene bag to the author.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I wish to thank my wife Audrey for drawing the illustrations.

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APOLOGY

I must apologise for not acknowledging some recent contributions: in most cases the writers will see their articles or letters in this issue.

Ed.

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DIANA M. NAPPER, B.Sc. (Lond.)

We heard with sadness from Kew of the passing of Diana on 31st March 1972. She had been one of us in the East African Herbarium from September 1955, when she transferred as scientific assistant from the Coffee Research Station, Ruiru. She resigned from the East African Herbarium in December 1964 and left for the U.K. where she became a member of the Staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, until her death.

On joining E.A.A. & F.R.O. she immediately took up the study of the Cyperaceae and Gramineae of East Africa. The results of her work in the Cyperaceae appeared in the *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc.* Vols. 24 (106):1, 24 (109):23; 25 (110):1; 26(113):1; 28 (124):1 - 14. By great bad luck the MS. of the last part was lost in the post and she did the whole work again, and this was published in Vol. 28 (124):1 - 14 (1971).

Then her "Grasses of Tanganyika" appeared in 1965, as *Bull.* No.18 of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Wild Life, Tanzania, a book of 148 pages with 20 plates illustrating 279 spikelets of grasses all drawn by herself. On account of these works, she will be remembered with gratitude for many years to come by everyone in East Africa who has to deal with these two difficult and important families.

She was also a very active member of the East Africa Natural History Society, being its Hon. Secretary from March 1955 to May 1956.

During her service in the East African Herbarium she made many collections of plants including marine algae, grasses and Acanthaceae and her collecting numbers ran to over 2100.

She was acting Botanist in Charge of the E.A. Herbarium from May to August 1964.

It was very pleasant having her amongst us again, when she returned in August 1969 in connection with her studies on that very difficult family the Acanthaceae for the Flora of Tropical East Africa.

She was a most pleasant companion, a very active and hard worker and it is a great tragedy that her life has been cut short in its prime.

P.J.G.

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AN EARLY REFERENCE TO TOOL - USING BY BIRDS OF PREY

Thanks to the work and fine photographs of the Van Lawicks (Van Lawick-Goodall and Van Lawick-Goodall 1966 *Nature* 212:1468-69) it is now well established that the Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* is a member of the select band of creatures which use tools to help them obtain food. In their article they reported that a limited population of Egyptian Vultures in the Serengeti has learned the technique of breaking open the thick-shelied eggs of ostiches by throwing stones at them. Leslie Brown mentions in his book 'African Birds of Prey' (p.57) that he had long known that Egyptian Vultures managed to break ostrich eggs to eat their contents, and that this fact had been reported by Africans to Victorian Naturalists, but the technique of breaking the eggs was not known at that time.

I recently came across an early reference which indicates that this (or a similar) technique was in fact apparently well-known to Wakamba tribesmen over fifity years ago. The following extract is from Gerhard Lindblom's comprehensive ethnological work 'The Akamba in British East Africa' (2nd edition. Uppsala 1920. p.329) from a chapter on their knowledge of natural history:

> ".....Certain birds of prey - I have forgotten which - are said to be very keen on ostrich eggs. But as they are often unable to peck a hole in them with their bills, they take stones in their claws and let them drop down on the eggs, thus cracking them....."

It should be noted that whereas the Van Lawicks' observations and photographs show that the stones are thrown from the beak, the above quotation refers to stones being held in the claws. This discrepancy may or may not real depending on how much reliance one can place on the earlier report.

It is unfortunate (to say the least) that Lindblom should have forgotten which birds of prey had learned this habit. Nor apparently did he appreciate the biological importance of tool-using birds. Presumably the birds of prey referred to are Egyptian Vultures or - more intriguingly - do other birds of prey use tools ?

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CASTS OR PELLETS OF THE BARN OWL *TYTO ALBA*

For the past fifteen months I have been collecting the casts or pellets from the nest/rest sites of an owl at the south end of Lake Magadi, in order to analyse the prey taken; however on some visits, I have found few or no pellets which suggests either that the owl was not in residence or that some other person, with the same interests as mine, has also been collecting pellets!

If the latter is the case I would much like to know and get in touch so that the results of the analysis can be pooled. My results are almost complete with the exception of the identification of a few bird skulls.

This is a difficult subject as there are no good reference collections of skulls where comparisons could be undertaken.

In passing, it is of interest that alonside this owls nest, which is in a cliff face, in what remains of the nest chamber of a Red and Yellow Barbet *Trachyphonus erythrocephalus* there is another old barbet's nest now occupied by the Grey Hornbill *Tokus nasutus*. The female was found sealed in on 18 March 1972 and this same hole was occupied by the hornbills last year and first found sealed on 21 February 1971. In the same cliff face there are four more active barbets nests and last year an excavated chamber was the nest site for the Pigeon *Columba guinea*.

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BLACK - RUMPED WAXBILLS NESTING IN KENYA

On 19th June 1971, we flushed a pair of Black-rumped Wasbills *Estrilda troglodytes* several times from a small bush (30cm high) in open bush/grassland 2km east of Usengi Market (Yimbo Location, Siaya District, Nyanza). Investigation produced a nest close to the ground which was flask-shaped with the spout inclined downwards into a small depression; the sphere of the nest had an external diameter of 10cm with with the spout 4cm; construction was of fine grass culms and heads lined with soft grass heads. On top of the 'flask' was a 'cock nest' (cup-shaped) of similar size and construction materials.

There were no eggs or young on the 19th and, on 22nd July 1971, the nest was deserted so that there is no proof of breeding. It would appear to be the first record of the species nesting in Kenya and this would not be unlikely since we have seen it at this locality several times in the breeding season.

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QUELEAS AND ATTENDANT PREDATORS

In early February 1972, Red-billed Queleas *Quelea quelea* were breeding in Tsavo National Park (East) in what appeared to be rather a far-flung nesting colony near the Galana River, south of Lugard's Falls. Apart from the noise made by the birds and their young, the colony attracted attention through the large numbers of avain predators and scavengers in its vicinity. In particular, many Marabou Storks *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* had assembled in trees and on the ground or were soaring overhead. White Storks *Ciconia ciconia* and Steppe Eagles *Aquila rapax orientalis* were also present, as well as some Vultures, mainly White-backed *Gyps bengalensis*. None of these birds were actually seen feeding on Queleas, but it can be inferred that they were hanging around for nestlings that fell out of their nests or other 'spoils' of the mass production.

An even more impressive 'show' was given some weeks later, after the young had hatched and the Queleas swarmed all over the park in large flocks. They assembled locally at waterholes and the following spectacle could be seen for days on end (detailed observations on 13th March 1972). The Queleas perched in densely packed masses on some *Lawsonia inermis* bushes at the waterhole and large flocks were constantly flying back and forth, with branches swaying up and down as birds flew up or alighted. Several Marabou and White Storks were wading in the water around the bushes, apparently waiting for casualities, which occurred in the following manner: flying low over the water's surface, Queleas sometimes tried to take a quick bath on the wing. Once in a while, a bird got soaked too much, fell into the water and paddled around frantically; but not for long: a Marabou (or other attendant predator/scavenger) quickly snapped the bird from the water and devoured it. On the trees around the waterhole a variety of birds of prey were perched, apparently all waiting for a similar chance. Fish Eagles *Haliaetus vocifer* repeatedly swooped down, grabbed a half drowned Quelea from the water and returned with it to the tree to have a snack. Steppe Eagles, Wahlberg's Eagles *Aquila wahlbergi*, Black Kites *Milvus migrans* and the occasional Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* were also sitting on nearby trees or flying overhead. Although none of these were actually seen (by us) taking any prey, they probably did get a morsel from time to time. Several Lanner Falcons *Falco biarmicus* also joined in the game and seemed to have established circuits on which they flew round and round over the waterhole, occasionally picking up a Quelea in flight and even eating it on the wing. Standing on top of the *Lawsonia* bush and constantly surrounded by Queleas whirring around was a Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala*. From time to time he lowered his head, neck held in a snake-like posture, went theough some quivering motions (presumably to locate his anticipated prey accurately) and suddenly darted forward, repeatedly emerging with a struggling Quelea in his beak. A quick gulp, some swallowing motions, and he went on preening himself or just standing motionless until, presumably, the constant turmoil all around aroused his hunting urge again.

While all this was going on, the Quelea flocks swarmed back and forth all the time, sometimes appearing like dark clouds in the sky, sometimes evoking impressions of a snowstorm (we were on overseas leave in November/December!). The concerted efforts of all the attendant predators certainly had no visible effect on the seemingly infinite numbers of the small brown birds.

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Voi, Kenya.

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CORRECTION

April 1972 *Bulletin*: p.60: *Lonchura poensis*, p.65: Crematogaster.

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE RED - HEADED PARROT IN UGANDA

The Red-headed Parrot *Poicephalus gulielmi* is not recorded for Uganda by Jackson (1938), Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1957) or White (1965). Likewise it is not given for the Impenetrable Forest by Keith *et al.* (1969) or Friedmann & Williams (1970). *P.g. Massaicus* is common in a number of the highland forests of western Kenya, including Elgon, but as far as I know, it has not been recorded on the Uganda side of the mountain. White (*op. cit.*) gives the range of the nominate subspecies as "....... east to Ubangi, Kasai and Upper Congo."

Whilst staying at Ruhizha in the Impenetrable Forest, south-west Uganda, from 6th through 11th August 1971, I daily saw parties of up to about thirty parrots which I thought were *P. gulielmi* passing over the rest-house at about 0800h and 1830h. I am very familiar with the calls of *P. massaicus* in Kenya, and thought those made by these birds were less piercing and unpleasant. During this period the birds were also seen by Aiden Sudbury, Patrick Boston and Miss Joel Litvany. The first observer saw them well on one or two occasions and was able to take sufficient field notes for me to identify them conclusively as *P. gulielmi*.

The Impenetrable Forest is a considerable distance from the known range of any of the three subspecies (the third, *fantiensis*, is known from Ghana). The birds at Ruhizha were seen at an altitude of 2500 - 2700m a.s.l., and whereas the eastern subspecies are birds of highland forest, the western ones are birds of lowland forest.

This would appear to be the first record for Uganda.

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YOUNG BOTANISTS STUDYING THEIR LOCAL PLANTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Students at the Botany Department of the University of Nairobi have gained considerable interest in the fields of ecology and taxonomy. As is customary in this department, a student is normally expected to undertake some investigations in his or her chosen field and write a report on the findings. This undergraduate work is generally presented in the final year of the degree course as a junior dissertation. Among such papers already presented to this department, which might be of some interest to readers are (May 1971 graduating class):

Adalla, J.J. Plant succession in Amboseli Game Reserve (Kenya).

Opiyo, (Miss) E.A. An investigation of medicinal plants in Acholi District, Northern Uganda.

Owino, F. A taxonomic investigation and economic survey of exotic conifers grown in Kenya.

Qorro, (Miss) H.S. An investigation of medicinal plants in Hanang' District, Arusha Region, Tanzania.

Touching on new and more interesting ecological and taxonomic areas are also the present final years. Just to mention a few papers to be presented as May 1972 B.Sc. dissertations, our readers may find a few more problems solved in:

Ayieko, J.O. A taxonomic and ecological study of aquatic plants of the lake basin of Nyanza Province in relation to land use in swamps.

Kokwaro, (Mrs) E.D. Studies on useful local plants of Western Province of Kenya. (Included in the descriptions of each species are local names and their botanical equivalents, and any known usage.)

Mukusya, (Mrs) J.M. A taxonomic investigation of medicinal plants of Machakos District, Kenya.

Ndiritu, D.W. Effect of termite mounds on vegetation of Tsavo (East) National Park.

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MASSIVE BUTTERFLY MIGRATION

Travelling to the coast from Nairobi on 22nd March 1972, a massive butterfly migration was found to be taking place between 10.30 - 11.30hrs roughly from Ndi to Maungu, a distance of some 40km. The day was hot, dry, cloudless. The greatest concentration was around Voi with the movement clearly north-east. At times numbers were so great it was impossible to make a count or even estimate and while at Sagala Lodge grounds, over a beer, Pierines were crossing the lawn at the rate of 20 to 30 per minute while many tarried to feed on the composite weed *Tridactyle procumbens.*

On our return trip next day, an hour later in the morning, the flight was still in progress travelling north-east. Species netted or taken from the car radiator were of the following in order of numbers crossing the road:

> PIERINES. The black and white *Pontia helice, Belenois zochalia* and many pale yellow or green *Catopsila florella*, numbers of the 'zebra-patterned' *Pinacopteryx eriphia* with fair numbers of the yellow *Eurema hecaba* and *E. brigitta* and *Colotis* spp. (the "red or orange tips'). Numerous also were the Nymphalids *Precis hierta* and the brown *Byblia ilithyia* with the Danaid *Danaus chrysippus* and some *Papilio demodocus.*

A similar north-east movement of Pierines was watched in my garden at Karen on Sunday 19th March between 10.15 and 13hrs in bright sunlight. Most of these were *C. florella* (more males than females) and *B. zochalia* and *B. aurota.* Of interest was the effect of cloud shadow on the movement of these, for when a shadow fell on the flowerbed and the lawn, all the pierines dropped immediately to the ground and rested, then as rapidly moved off as soon as the shadow had passed; other butterflies were not so affected.

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HERRING GULLS IN UGANDA

On 5th March 1972, Mr A.P. Smith and I were visiting Kakindu Swamp south of Lutembe Beach on the east side of Entebbe Peninsula, when we disturbed a flock of about forty gulls. The majority were Lesser Black-backed Gulls *Larus fuscus* (strangely almost all adults), with a few Grey-headed Gulls *L. cirrocephalus*, among them. Our attention was caught by an adult Herring Gull *L. argentatus* flying with the Lesser Black-backs. It was the same size as the Lesser Black-backs, had clear grey wings and back, and the wings had black tips with white 'windows'. Unfortunately we were not able to see the colour of the legs. The flock alighted on a distant mudbank too far off for any more details to be picked out.

As far as I know this is the first record of a Herring Gull in the Entebbe area for over twenty years. The only other occurrences, to my knowledge, were recorded by Dr Eggeling in 1950 (U.G.F.D. Report 1950). Two, an adult and an immature were seen on 6th - 8th August; an immature was again seen on 8th September and 28th November and an adult on 22nd and 30th September and 29th November. These records refer to one of the yellow-legged races.

It would seem that the species is rather unusual in East Africa. It is not mentioned by Jackson (1938) and Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952) do not mention its occurrence in any of the three East African countries. The species is not mentioned as occurring in any of the three Uganda National Parks (U.N.P.H. 1971) and it is not mentioned by Williams (1968) or Backhurst and Backhurst (1970) in their respective lists.

It is worth pointing out that it would be easy to overlook an immature Herring Gull among the wintering Lesser Black-backs on Lake Victoria unless especially looked for.

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SITATUNGA SANCTUARY AT SAIWA SWAMP

A most pleasant camping spot of interest to naturalists of all kinds is the Sitatunga Sanctuary at Saiwa Swamp, northeast of Kitale. Although certainly worth a daytime visit, it is particularly suitable for a one-night camp since the Sitatunga *Tragelaphus spekei* are most easily seen in the evening or early morning. In addition to the rare and interesting aquatic antelope themselves, the area is excellent for bird watching with many 'Western' species characteristic of the Mt. Elgon area. During a visit on 5th and 6th February, ten Sitatunga were seen in the evening within twenty minutes of arrival and seven the following morning. 73 species of birds were identified at the site including marsh species such as the Kaffir Rail *Rallus caerulescens* and the Blackcap Bush-Shrike *Tchagra minuta* and such 'Western' species as Ross's Turaco *Musophaga rossae*, the Eastern Grey Plantain-eater *Crinifer zonurus*, Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus*, Grey-throated Barbet *Gymnobucco bonapartei* and the Black-throated Apalis *Apalis jacksoni*.

The swamp itself is a valley bottom some 6km long and perhaps averaging 100m in width, with gallery forest along the banks. The rangers on duty have built a dozen or more tree platforms without which the Sitatunga could only be seen with great difficulty, as the swamp is filled with bullrushes *Typha domingensis* broken only occasionally by open water. The damp woods and soft sounds of water give the area a cool, almost primeval serenity broken periodically by the splashing of a Sitatunga bounding back into the seclusion of the reeds. Otters are frequently in evidence and

De Brazza monkeys *Cercopithecus neglectus* inhabit the forest just across a small causeway from the camp. Instructions on how to find the Saiwa Swamp (not the nearby Sitatunga Swamp listed on maps) can be obtained from the Youth Hostel at Greaves farm about 9.5km before reaching Kitale, or from the Honorary Warden, Mr T.J. Barnley of Kitale.

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REVIEW

*Christensen, S., Nielsen, B.P., Porter, R.F., & Willis, I. 1971. Flight identification of European raptors. Part 2. *Br.Birds* 64:435-455. & 1972. Part 3. *Br.Birds* 65:52-78.

In a previous edition of the *Bulletin* (*E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1971:169-170) G.C. Backhurst noticed the first part of a series of papers which is appearing in *British Birds* on the identification of European raptors in flight. This paper dealt with the Buzzards *Buteo* and *Pernis*. The second part covers the Red and Black Kite *Milvus milvus* & *M. migrans*, Booted and Bonelli's Eagles *Hieraaetus pennatus* & *H. fasciatus*, Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* and the Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*. The third part deals with the Golden, Spotted, Lesser Spotted, Imperial and Steppe Eagles *Aquila chrysaet s, A. clanga, A. pomarina, A. heliaca* and *A. nipalensis* (=*A. rapax orientalis*) and the White-tailed Eagle *Haliaetus albicilla*.

Of the twelve species covered in Parts 2 and 3, eight occur regularly or as vagrants in East Africa, including some difficult species. These papers are illustrated with 48 black and white photographs and 77 line drawings showing each species from above and below, in all plumages and in various modes of flight. Anyone interested in identifying raptors in East Africa, particularly *Aquila* eagles, will find these papers invaluable.

C.F.M.

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CORRECTION

In P.J.G's Review of the Flora of Tropical East Africa (Leguminosae: Papilionoideae) there were three mistakes: "Papilionideae" should have been Papilionoideae; "(Parts 1 & 2)" should have been (Parts 3 & 4); "Ca", line 4 of review should be deleted.

Ed.

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REVIEW

THE BIRDS OF ZAMBIA by C.W. Benson, R.K. Brooke, R.J. Dowsett and M.P.S. Irwin, London: Collins, pp.414, 12 colour plates, 8 black and white habitat plates, 20 distribution maps and endpaper maps of Zambia. Price £2.50 (reviewer paid K.Shs.51.00 in Nairobi).

There are two criticisms of this book which I shall make at the outset: the English names are culled from a wide selection of standard works, R.O.S. field cards, and some are the invention of the authors; some are an improvement on those in use in East Africa but others are less acceptable. The English names in the book provide a good excuse for readers to learn and use the scientific names, which, in the main, follow White's well-known lists. The second, and last criticism concerns the twenty distribution maps in Appendix 4: these are absurdly tiny - eight to an octavo page, and are the most odd shape: the top and bottom borders are curved, the top being some 2mm longer than the bottom. In fact these borders are the lines 8° and 18°S. while the side borders are the lines 22° and 34°E. The resulting unusual shape is not visually harmonious.

Having dispensed with these weighty criticisms it is a pleasure to record that the rest of the book cannot be faulted. The format used is of the familiar Collins field guide series (but this book is *not* a field guide; as the authors point out, there are several books dealing with identification of the birds found in Zambia). The type used is a very small sansserif face which I find very clear in addition to being very economical of space. After the useful, detailed Introduction there follows a 12½ page section on habitats accompanied by 14 black and white photographs, while after this comes the bulk of the book, the Systematic List. Six hundred and ninety nine species are admitted to the Zambian list; species not yet admitted but which have been reported seen or suspected, are placed in square brackets.

Each entry takes the following form: a serial number followed by the species name, author and date and English name; immediately below are given references to Benson & White's 1957 Checklist, "Roberts", and Mackworth-Praed & Grant (southern third). Next comes an account of the species' habitat preferences and distribution, often with a discussion comparing two or more species from an ecological and distributional standpoint. If more than one subspecies occurs in Zambia they are also discussed in this section as well as in the next heading *Subspecies;* authors' names and dates are given for each subspecies. A *Breeding* paragraph follows giving recorded breeding activity by month and the account is rounded off by a list of *References:* these are by numbers and can be looked up in Appendix 1, the Bibliography. The form of giving references (which follows Benson & White's 1957 list) is, in my opinion, a second-best method but one dictated, no doubt, by the need to conserve space; the main point is that every statement in the text is supported by a reference.

Appendix 2 is a detailed and expanded Gazetteer of every locality mentioned in the text - an invaluable compilation. Recoveries of ringed birds make up Appendix 3 (5½ pages) and the Distribution Maps already mentioned (covering 58 species) are in Appendix 4. The work ends with separate indexes to Families, Genera and Species, and English names. The twelve colour plates distributed throughout the book have been painted beautifully by Commander A.M. Hughes; apart from being pleasing to look at, most of the birds shown are not figured so well (if at all) in other books used by birdwatchers in Zambia.

I hope that one day we in East Africa will have a book even half as good as this one. Thankyou Messrs Benson, Brooke, Dowsett and Irwin for setting such a fine example to the rest of Africa.

G.C.B.

CAMP AT RONGAI

A small but very sucessful camp was held during the week-end 18th/19th March in Menengai Crater on the Rongai side, by kind invitation of Mr & Mrs H.B. Barclay. The site was lovely, on flat short grass under spreading thorn trees at the foot of the crater cliffs. The Barclays had had the road repaired and everybody got up and down without difficulty, except for Mr Monk's trailer caravan, with which he would not risk the descent. However he took it off and drove his car down to join us in the evening and the morning and we could see the lights of his camp from our site and no doubt he could see ours.

There was plenty to remind us that we were at a high altitude besides a cold wind in the morning. A short drive took us to a veritable forest of Protea, and there was cedar there as well, though most of it seems to have been destroyed by last year's fire. Cinnamon-chested Bee-eaters *Merops oreobates* and Speckled Pigeons *Columba guinea* frequented the cliffs (and Hyrax peeped from every crack). Other birds noted were the Naivasha Chat (Schalow's Wheatear) *Oenanthe lugens* of which a pair were seen very well, and a Black-throated Honeyguide *Indicator indicator* which chattered at us to follow, though none of us complied. Though we saw the 30 commonest birds in Kenya, many of them were still unfamiliar to newcomers, and good views of Superb Starlings *Spreo superbus* and Nubian Woodpeckers *Campethera nubica* are always worth having.

Mr Mendes who joined us from Kisumu and is particularly interested in lizards, found a splendid pair of Agamids at the foot of the cliffs and hopes to go back and study them later. For the benefit of new members (and forgetful old ones!), let me repeat his request made on p.67 of the *Bulletin* 1971 - "If any members have records of Agamid lizards, I should be most grateful for information, including details of locality and notes on head colour." - his address is: A. Mendes, Box 124, Kisumu.

P.M.A.

Mrs Monica Bell writes: I am off to U.K. for 2 months on 2nd May... my date of return is 8th July... During my absence there are two servants in charge one in the house and one in the garden... I would love to think the N.H.S. members will come and go as they like, and I wonder if a note to this effect in the *Bulletin* would be a good idea ?

(Kisume people might be interested. It is a good area for birds but may not stay like that for very much longer.)

P.M.A.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I was reminded, on reading Peter and Hazel Britton's note in the February 1972 *Bulletin* of a Rough-wing Swallow attacking a bat about which I had intended to write for some time.

Twice, in June 1971, my wife and I observed a Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* attacking a Monitor Lizard *Varanus* sp. On the first occasion we only observed the swallow make its attacking dive once, but on the second occasion the bird attacked eight times while the monitor swam the length of one of the University sewage ponds, a distance of about 50m. The lizard did not dive and swim underwater as they usually do when frightened but only 'ducked' its head at the moment of attack. I estimated the lizard to be about 45cm long (judged from the size of its visible head).

Whether it was the same lizard or the same swallow on both occasions I could not say. There were many other swallows and Swifts about, but none showed any interest.

Norman Gardiner,
Box 35063,
Dar es Salaam.
Tanzani.

Sir,

On 6th February of this year, in Samburu Game Reserve, I was watching an adult Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* sitting in a thorn tree about 100m from the road. As we watched, he took off towards the road, being mobbed by a single Stripe-breasted Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser mahali* which actually landed on the eagle's back and rode it until it landed in a thorn tree about 20m in front of us. It then commenced to tear apart a sparrow-weaver's nest with its bill while 5 or 6 weavers watched and objected loudly from the top of the tree. It destroyed two nests in this manner, without apparently finding any eggs or nestlings, and flew off about 5 minutes after the start of the episode.

Laurence Frank,
Box 33,
Nakuru,
Kenya.

Sir,

BLACK - HEADED GULLS ?

Pursuing the correspondence on *Larus ridibundus* or possibly *L. genei*, between 31st March and 5th April 1972 there were four presumed Black-headed Gulls in non-breeding dress on the Mnarani side of Kilifi Creek.

Since returning to Nairobi and reading Dr Pearson's letter in the April *Bulletin*, my husband and I have studied a number of descriptions and photographs of both gulls, including excellent photos of the Slender-billed Gull in the January 1972 issue of *World of Birds*.

Not having received the April *Bulletin* before we went to Kilifi, we did not at that time think seriously of the gulls being anything but Black-headed and we are still inclined to think that they did not have the characteristics of the Slender-billed Gull described by Dr Pearson, i.e. the smudge on the neck was quite pronounced, the bill was not heavy, neither tail nor neck gave the impression of being long nor the head flat. They were in company with several Sooty Gulls *L. hemprichii* and I would not have considered their head and neck proportions in any way similar. There was, however, no sign of their coming into breeding dress.

Whether Black-headed or Slender-billed, it would seem that the range of these gulls both to Dar es Salaam and Entebbe has extended well beyond previous records and it will be most interesting to hear more.

J. Standish King,
Box 40058,
Nairobi.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

HOUSE MOUSE: I am anxoius to obtain records of the Common House Mouse *Mus musculus*, from East Africa. Although this species is common in many parts of the world, and has undoubtedly been introduced into East Africa, I have not identified it myself at Kabete.

I should welcome any information from Members or others. Such data may prove of value to a current veterinary investigation project.

J.E. Cooper,
c/o Veterinary Research Laboratory,
P.O. Kabete.

BIRDS OF PREY: I am conducting a survey of pesticides and heavy metals pollution in East African birds of prey, attempting to ascertain the amount of persistent pesticides carried by our local raptors. We are analysing for DDT, Dieldrin and other chlorinated hydrocarbons, the compounds that have been responsible for the decimation of Northern Hemisphere falcons, accipiters, sea-eagles and other fish-eating birds. I would be very grateful for any dead or injured lanners, peregrines, accipiters, fish eagles, vultures, tawny eagles or bateleurs that members may find along the roads or elsewhere.

We are particularly interested in the bird-eating hawks and the fish-eagles (including ospreys) because they have been so hard hit by pesticides in Europe and North America. Vultures and other scavenging birds are of interest because they are liable to feed on poisoned animals. Augurs, kites and harriers are not needed .

Specimens may be left with Mr John Cooper at the Vet.Lab., Kabete or at Baharini Wildlife Sanctuary on Lake Nakuru. If in doubt as to the identity of any bird, please bring it and we will see if it could be of any use.

Laurence Frank,
Box 33, Nakuru.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Saturday 6th May, 1972: Walk to identify Wild Flowers, led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m. and bring picnic.

Monday 8th May, 1972 at 5.15p.m.: Mr John Cooper M.R.C.V.S. will give an illustrated talk on HARRIER HAWKS in the National Museum Hall.

Sunday 14th May, 1972: Visit to the Kisumu heronry, led by Mr Peter Britton. Members should meet at the 8km post (from Kisumu) at 7.30 a.m. For camping and further details see April issue of the *Bulletin*.

Saturday 20th May, 1972: Miss P.M. Allen will lead a bird walk. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30p.m. and bring picnic tea.

Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th June, 1972: Lake Baringo Lodge. For bookings please contact the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi. See also below.

Monday 12th June, 1972 at 5.15p.m.: Mr D. Turner will give an illustrated on MADAGASCAR, THE GREAT RED ISLAND in the National Museum Hall.

Sunday 18th June, 1972: Visit to Mtaro Estate (between Ruiru and Thika) by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs F. Hartmann. More details in June issue.

Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th June, 1972: Lake Baringo Lodge, see below.

July 8th/9th (7th), 1972: Bushwackers Safari Camp. Members wishing to visit this interesting area on the Athi River during the above weekend, will find there committee members who are familiar with the plants and birds in the vicinity. Please contact Mrs Jane Stanton, P.O. Kibwezi for full details and for booking. Bushwackers has 'self service' bandas for two or more people at up to 25/- sh. per person per night. The distance from Nairobi is 225km mostly on tarmac.

LAKE BARINGO LODGE

At the time of writing, the following number of rooms are still available for these two weekends:

10th/11th June, 1972. Two double rooms and two rooms with only one person in them, i.e. space available for six more people.

24th/25th June, 1972. Two double rooms. Will any member wishing to attend the trips to this wonderful place, please fill in the form sent with the April issue and return it to me .

Denise Angwin, Secretary.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS IN KISUMU

In response to general interest, Vic Simpson started a series of meetings of the Society at Kisumu, which it is intended should continue despite his departure.

Lecture meetings are held most months - usually on the first thursday of any month at 7.15p.m. - at the British Council building in Kisumu. We owe the British Council, especially Mr Perret, our thanks for putting these facilities at our disposal.

Occasional field meetings have been organised - for instance, to catch, observe and ring birds in different habitats. These meetings will be advertised, when possible, in the *Bulletin* and at the British Council, Kisumu; for instance last month's issue contained details of the visit to the Kisumu heronry to be led by Peter Britton.

Enquiries about meetings, and offers to give lectures would be welcome, please contact John Harper, Maseno Secondary School, Box 120, Kisumu.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AT KISUMU

Thursday 4th May, 1972: "Ruwenzori Mountains' talk by Mr Martin Horrocks. So far only tentative.

Thursday 1st June, 1972: 'Snakes in East Africa' talk by Mr Ulf Kjellin.

Thursday 6th July, 1972: 'Aspects of New Guinea' talk by Dr David Smith.

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FOR SALE

Three copies of Mackworth-Praed & Grant "African Handbook of Birds" 2 Vols. Series I. Birds of Eastern and North Eastern Africa. London: Longmans, Green & Co. at reasonable prices:
Please apply to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, and mark your envelope 'P & G', these will not be opened until 17th May; to give up-country members a chance - the first three opened will secure.

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NEW MEMBERS - MAY 1972

Life Member:

Mr D.T.V. Swinscow, 103 London Road, Knebworth, Herts, England.

Full Members:

Mr Robert Abramson, Box 42247, Nairobi.
Mr Ronald Albon, Box 30035, Nairobi.
Mrs M.F. Bell, Sirwa, P.O. Kaimosi, Kenya.
Rev. Noel Cox, Box 40580, Nairobi.
Miss Ellen Delaney, Box 30053, Nairobi.
Dr Frank Gill, c/o Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson, Box 40658, Nairobi.
Miss Barbara J. Mitchell, Box 43307, Nairobi.
Mr D.A.E. O'Connor, Box 30091, Nairobi.
Miss Audrey C.J. Sandford, Box 30053, Nairobi.
Dr D.W.G. Smith, Box 40584, Nairobi.
Mr P.J. Terry, Box 1157, Arusha, Tanzania.
Mr Bob Wager, Box 14581, Westland, Nairobi.
Miss J. Westenburg, Box 30333, Nairobi.

Junior Members:

Adrian Albon, Box 30035, Nairobi.
Anu Varma, Box 16, Athi River, Kenya
Poonam Varma, Box 16, Athi River, Kenya.
Sunit Varma, Box 16, Athi River.

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Kisumu Heronry trip Sunday 14th May, 1972: When visited on 26th April, there was virtually no activity at the heronry, presumably due to the lack of rain; so that the visit scheduled for 14th May, 1972 is regrettably cancelled. The visit will take place when the situation returns to normal, probably in June or July. Date to be announced later.

P.L. Britton,
Sawagongo Secondary School,
Private Bag, P.O. Yala.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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AFRICAN KITES ON THE GROUND

I have often seen single birds or small groups of African Kites *Milvus migrans parasitus* on the roadside feeding on the remains of an animal killed by an automobile, but until recently had never seen large numbers of these birds feeding on the ground under other circumstances. For the week beginning on the 20th February 1972, a group of about sixty African Kites would settle on the University of Dar es Salaam football field, usually in the afternoon from about 1300 - 15.30h. A few, never more than ten, would lie on their breasts motionless with wings outstretched, apparently resting. Most, however, would walk slowly about digging their beaks into the soil, evidently in search of the small arthropod (insect?) prey which they were seen to eat. But the birds would fly off when I tried to move closer to determine exactly what type of food they were eating. A search of the area where the birds were feeding revealed no large insects such as grasshoppers, but only two beetles. Marks left by the birds' beaks were clearly visible in the soil.

Chapin (1932, p.555) mentions that Kites may be seen near feeding vultures, and that soaring Kites will eat insects carried up to them by currents of air warmed by bush fires. Jackson (1938, p.169) states that the Kite is fond of locusts and termites, and that "It seizes all its food, whether scraps of offal or flying termites, with its claws, and while circling around on the wing, conveys it to its mouth by simultaneously lowering its head and bringing forward its feet, either to tear it to pieces or to bolt it whole." The birds observed did not use their feet in eating but simply caught the prey in their beaks and swallowed it.

In view of their abundance and generalised feeding habits it is not surprising to find Kites feeding on arthropods on the ground. One wonders why this is not seen, or at least reported, more often. Perhaps other readers can add their observations as to the frequency of large numbers of Kites feeding on arthropod prey while on the gound.

K.M. Howell,
Dept. of Zoology,
University of Dar es Salaam,
Box 35064, Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania.

REFERENCES:

Chapin, J.P. (1932) The birds of the Belgian Congo. Part I. *Bull. Am. Mus. nat. Hist.* Vol.LXV.

Jackson, F.J. (1938) The Birds of Kenya Colony and the Uganda Protectorate. Vol.I. London: Gurney & Jackson.

NOTICE

The draw for the three sets of Mackworth-Praed & Grant, Birds of Eastern and North Eastern Africa, has taken place and the successful applicants have been informed by post.

Secretary.

FISHES OF THE KENYA REEF - V:

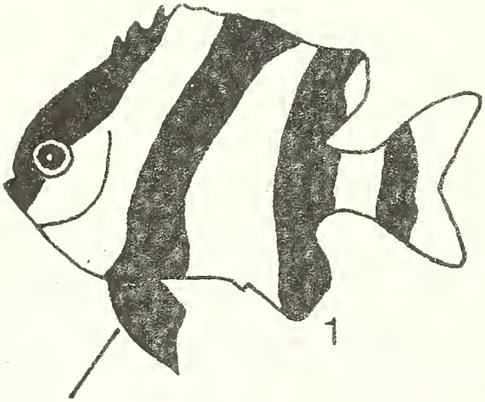
POMACENTRIDAE, THE CORAL FISH OR DAMSELS

The preceding four notes on fishes of the Kenya reef briefly introduced 33 families well represented by many species, or by one or more abundant species. The following series of notes will attempt to provide a rough identification guide to the most common species of the larger families.

The Pomacentridae, called Coral fish or Damsels (or Bouteur in Seychelles), is perhaps one of the most typical families of the tropical reefs. They are mostly small, often brilliantly coloured fish, and one can almost guarantee seeing one or more species within a few minutes goggling in rocky shoreline or reef pools, or among coral debris. Most of the species prefer to be near good cover, but there are a few which occur in more or less open water in shoals, often vast.

Many exhibit strong territorial behaviour patterns, and these are to be found solitary or in pairs. Others occur in small shoals, and seem to occupy the same group territory; once located, the same shoal will be seen on a re-visit, even several months later, to the same coral head or reef pool. Included in the family are three species which live in and around giant sea anemones: two species of the Anemone or Clown fish *Amphiprion* and the Domino fish *Dascyllus*. The two species of *Amphiprion* spend their entire lives among or near the anemones, a most intriguing relationship. That the Anemone fish gain excellent protection from predators in this otherwise dangerous habitat is certain; but why they should not themselves be devoured still awaits a satisfactory explanation. *Dascyllus* only lives among the anemones while juvenile. When adult, it is to be found living a normal, active coral fish life, always near protective cover.

As a group, the family conforms to a fairly constant basic shape pattern. The body is compressed, and the scales are normally fairly large. The genera are separated primarily on shape of teeth. In the genera *Amphiprion*, *Chromis* and *Dascyllus*, the teeth are conical; in *Abudefduf* and *Pomacentrus*, the teeth are compressed and incisor-shaped. Within these two groups, presence or absence of serrations on the opercle or pre-opercle (gill covers) determine the genus. For most people, these considerations are too technical; in addition, a fish in the hand and a hand-lens are necessary for an unequivocal decision on these characters. Fortunately, the most common species are extremely easily identified by colour or colour patterns. I have therefore attempted to give a brief guide to the 19 species of local Coral fish that gogglers are most likely to encounter along our reef. Apart from shape and colour patterns, habitat is often an extremely useful aid to identification: I have indicated where each species is most likely to be found. (Smith and Smith (1963) list a total of 46 species for the Seychelles: it is likely more occur here.)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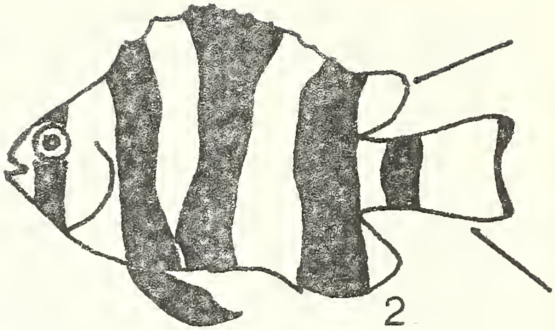
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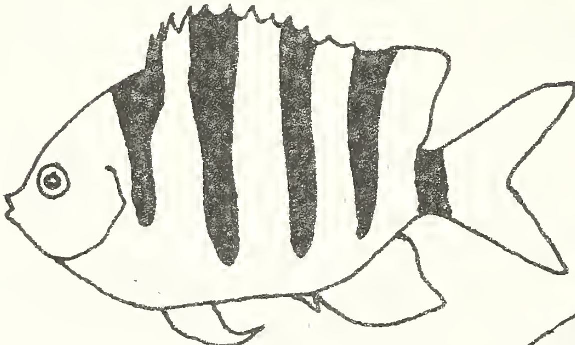
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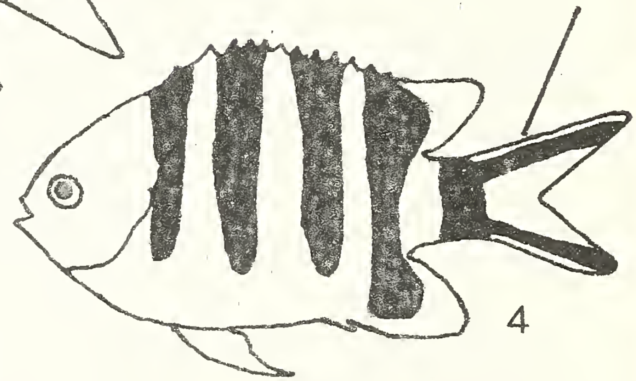
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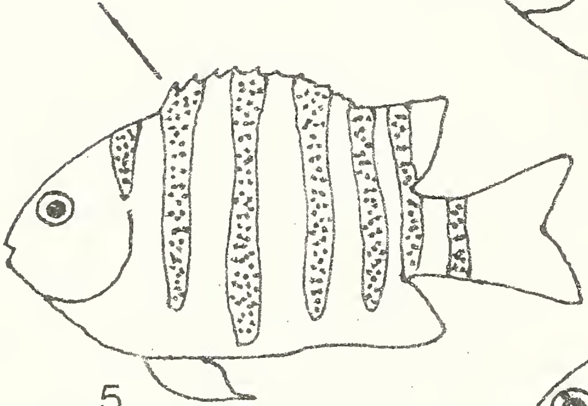
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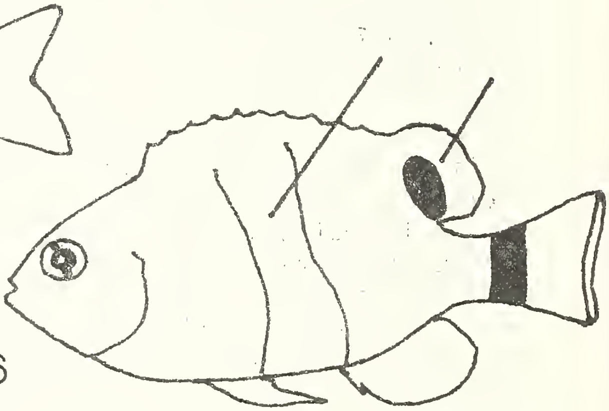
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POMACENTRIDAE - CORAL OR DAMSEL FISHES

1. *Dascyllus aruanus.* 8cm. Four vertical black stripes on white; leading edges of pelvic fins brilliant blue. About and among living coral, in small groups.

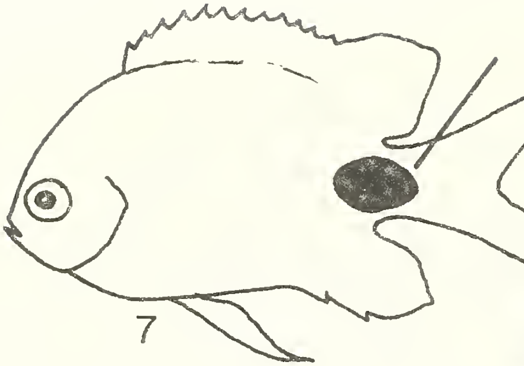
2. *Abudefduf annulatus.* 8cm. Five vertical black stripes (which go round the fish as "rings", hence *annulatus*) on white body; rear of dorsal and anal fins and tailfin orange. Among coral rock and debris in shallow water; usually solitary or in pairs, occupying a well-defined territory and have a "home" within this.

3. *Abudefduf saxatilis.* 25cm. Five vertical black stripes on silvery body, areas between stripes may have small orange spots on scales. In small shoals, in reef and shore pools.

4. *Abudefduf sexfasciatus.* 18cm. Five vertical black stripes on silvery, bluish body; tail with a black band along each lobe, which makes identification easy and unmistakeable. Often in vast numbers, especially in Watamu Marine National Park.

5. *Abudefduf septemfasciatus.* 18cm. Seven vertical yellowish stripes alternating with darkish bands. In small shoals in rocky shoreline or reef pools.

6. *Abudefduf xanthozonas.* 10cm. Body colour light to darkish brown, with broad light coloured (whitish to yellowish) zone across middle of body. Mainly among coral debris and rocks, in shallow water. Usually solitary.



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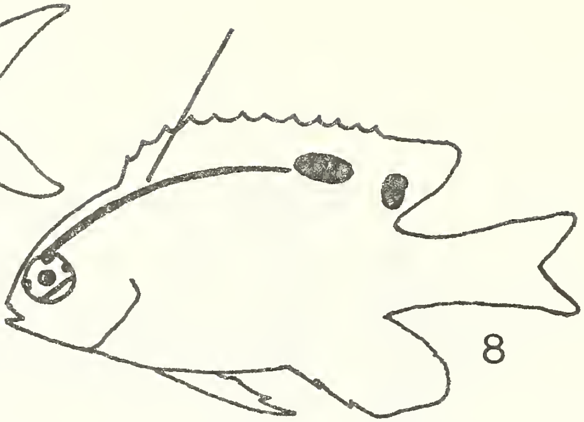

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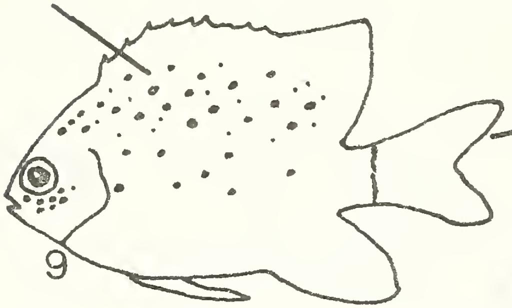

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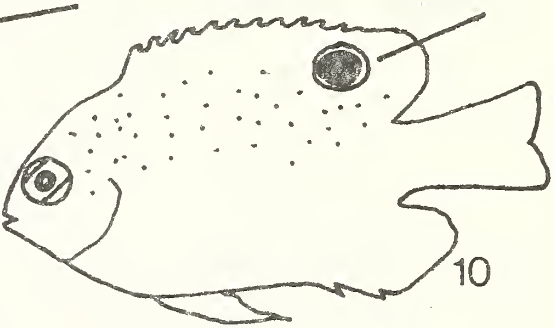

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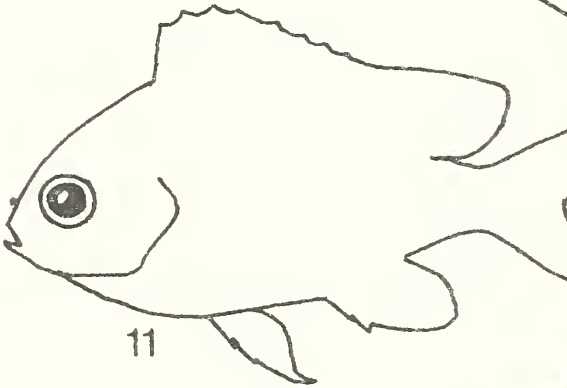

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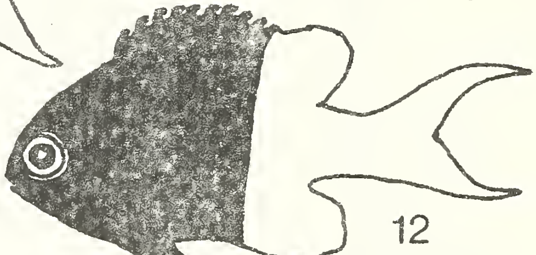

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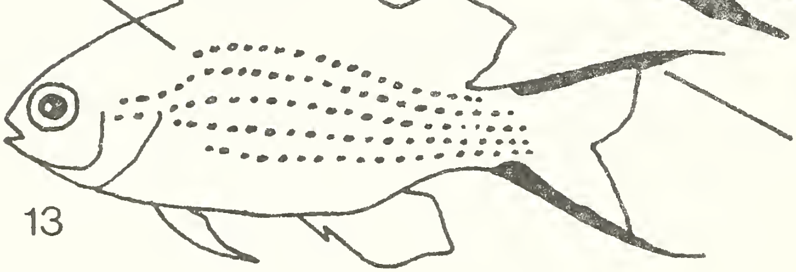

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7. *Abudefduf sparoides.* 13cm. Blue green or silvery grey,with a large black spot or blotch near base of tail. In small shoals in reef or shore pools; juveniles common at Diani.

8. *Abudefduf biocellatus.* 8cm. Orange to orange-yellow, with an irridescent brilliant blue line starting at or near the eye and running along each side of the upper part of the body, near the dorsal fin. Usually two dark spots on dorsal. Common in reef pools at Diani.

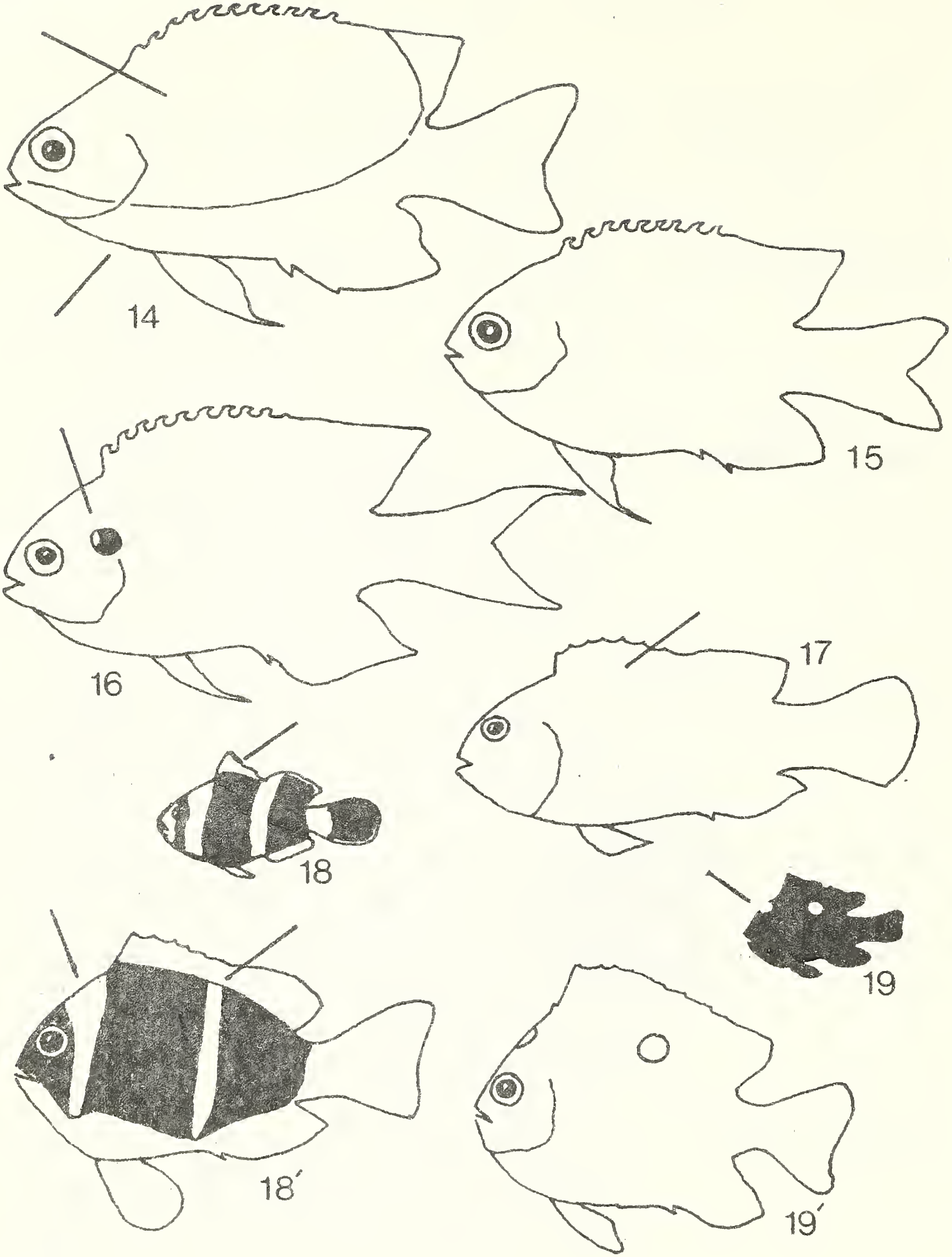
9. *Abudefduf lacrymatus.* 8cm. Dark brown body, with scattered small irridescent green spots; tail lighter, often reddish or orange brown. This species shows an extremely strongly developed territorial behaviour, and will "attack" an intruding hand or foot. Among rocks and coral in the lagoon and in larger reef pools.

10. *Pomacentrus tripunctatus.* 8cm. Body orange, with small purplish spots on scales. Black spot with bluish halo often present on body towards rear of dorsal fin. Common in larger reef pools; occupies a well-defined territory.

11. *Chromis caeruleus.* 8cm. Body uniformly turquoise blue; occurs in large shoals at Kisiti Island, Shimoni.

12. *Chromis dimidiatus.* 6cm. Unmistakeable, front half of fish dark brown, rear whitish, with an abrupt dividing line between colours. Usually encountered in small shoals; at Kisiti Island, Shimoni, seasonally in vast numbers.

13. *Chromis nigrurus.* 7cm. One of the smallest of the coral fishes, it attains 7cm but most fish seen in the small shoals (10 - 20 individuals) are about 5cm. The species appear dark coloured in the water; bluish with lower parts yellow, 4 - 5 horizontal lines of small, blue spots; tail yellow, with a black band along each lobe. In the larger reef pools, common at Diani.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POMACENTRIDAE - CORAL OR DAMSEL FISHES

14. *Pomacentrus pulcherrimus*. 10cm. Upper part brilliant irridescent dark blue, lower part orange. Common in reef pools at Diani.

15. *Pomacentrus sulfureus*. 12cm. Body uniform yellow or yellow orange; common at Kisiti Island, Shimoni.

16. *Pomacentrus pavo*. 8cm. Body uniform turquoise green, appears blue in certain angles of light. Small black spot above gill cover, more or less in line with eye. Small shoals, never far from cover of coral or coral rocks.

17. *Amphiprion akallopisos*. 8cm. Body uniform light orange, with lighter-coloured dorsal and tail fins. One of two common species of anemone fish found along our reef; abundant in the giant anemones (*Stoichactis*) especially at Kisiti Island, Shimoni.

18 & 18'. *Amphiprion ephippium*. 12cm. Juveniles (18) alternating black and white, first dorsal and base of tail orange. Adults (18') with black body, bluish white vertical bars, orange fins, whitish-yellow tail. Habitat the same as *A. akallopisos*; young abundant in giant anemones, and especially in a species of large green anemone. Adults never move far from their anemone home.

19 & 19'. *Dascyllus trimaculatus*. 13cm. Juveniles (19) jet black, with three white spots, one in front of head, and one on each side of body below dorsal fin. Adults (19') pale pinky-brown; white spots retained. Young in giant green anemones, which they often share with the young of *A. ephippium*. Adults common (not in anemones). Abundant.

Ken Bock,
E.A.A.F.R.O. (Muguga),
Box 30148, Nairobi.

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PIONEER PLANT COLLECTING IN WESTERN KENYA

The idea of drawing and painting wild flowers was first suggested to me by Mrs Moreau (late of Amani) when she was still Miss Bradberry. I visited her when she lived in the Libyan Desert, not very far from the subsequently famous field of Alamein. In the short rainy season the loveliest wild flowers spring up there - gladiolus, asphodel, scarlet ranunculus, purple and white anemones, and many others. I found Miss Bradberry drawing one of these.

This was in 1923. In 1925 we came to Kenya as settlers, buying a coffee farm on the S.E. slopes of Mt. Elgon. I began to draw terrestrial orchids. These flourish in the long rainy season of Western Kenya, which suits them better than the two short rainy seasons of the East of Rift climate. There were many species, and because they look well in water it was fairly easy to get a drawing done. Later on I learned to look up and find the epiphytic orchids. But when I wanted names for my drawings, nobody knew. However my sister-in-law, who lived in London, was acquainted with Dr Cotton of the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, and through her I was able to send the drawings to Kew in order to obtain names for them. I then found that botanists were not usually prepared to name from drawings. I was urged to send specimens but did not know how to set about it. When Dr Cotton discovered that I lived on Elgon he sent out two presses and begged me to send him specimens of the Giant *Senecios* from its higher slopes. He had a theory that there should be three species up there; only one, *S. elgonensis*, was known at that time, whereas several species were found on the other mountain tops of East Africa. However, going up Elgon in those days meant a safari with porters because there was no road, and I lacked the experience and iniative to set about it. In any case we were busy farming and raising a family. I pictured myself getting to the top and failing to find the groundsels in the thick scrub, little did I realise that the upper slopes of Elgon are covered with groves of them.

Meanwhile I was still seeking names for orchids. At that time Miss Napier was starting a herbarium in the Coryndon Museum in Nairobi, and I wondered if I could find some names there. Nairobi was a long way from Kitale in those days and we never went so far; but a neighbour who went more often offered to find out at the Museum whether I might send in collections of plants and get some of them named. She brought back a message that further collectors were not needed in the Elgon area. Thus my eyes were turned again to Kew.

In October 1930 Major E.J. Lugard paid a visit to his son, Major C.E.Lugard who had a farm not far from ours. He was an experienced collector and intended to make a thorough collection of the Elgon flora for Kew.
He ascended Elgon and collected specimens of what is now *Senecio barbatipes* Hedb. but it had recently been collected by several Forest Officers and sent in by Mr H.M. Gardner, who at that time was Chief Conservator of Forests. The type specimen was a gathering by Mr E.J. Honore of the Forest Department. It was then named *S. gardneri* Cotton. Major Lugard discovered that I had two presses and was drawing orchids, and urged me to collect more widely and

send specimens to Kew in order to complete his own collection, which was made only during the drier months of the year. The following dry season Cyril and Kitty Lugard took me with them on a safari up Elgon, taught me how to set about collecting and showed me in the field how to identify the giant *Senecios* by their leaves only. It was some years and several safaris later that I was able to see all three species in flower. On this first safari I collected a few leaves of what I thought was a third species. These had already been sent in by two other collectors as part of gatherings of *S. elgonensis*..This proved to be Dr Cotton's third species, which was published in the *Kew Bulletin* in 1932 as *S. amblyphyllus* Cotton.

On this safari I made an extensive collection of the flora, especially of the moorlands. I had no idea then how little collecting had been done on Elgon, or that my very amateurish collection would have some importance in the Botanical world, being in the event one of the collections much quoted by Professor Hedberg in his "Afroalpine Vascular Plants". Altogether I have made seven ascents to the top of Elgon, by various routes, the last being in 1947; and on each trip I collected as much as possible. On these safaris, on foot with porters and camping out for several nights, drawing flowers was too difficult. Still obsessed with orchids I did make a drawing of *Disa stairsii* on my first safari. But in my own home I began to collect and draw other plants found on the farm. This led to a number of plants being omitted when I had no time to draw them, which was a pity, as the flora was very luxuriant in those early days. I did however manage to draw every orchid which came my way.

Nobody ever gave me any instructions about methods of collecting. It was not till about 1947 that I saw one of those useful typed sets of instructions for collectors. I learnt by trail and error and the patient instructions of people at Kew, who encouraged me sometimes with lists of names. I remember well an interview with Dr Cotton on one of my rare visits to England in the 1930s, when he talked to me about giant Senecios. I remember an early interview with Mr Summerhayes, I did not even file my earliest letters. There was a memorable one from Mr Summerhayes describing how some small orchids I had sent him were the first specimens recorded from Kenya of what were known as West African species. These came from Kaimosi in the Kakamega Forest, and were an early indication of the importance of that forest to naturalists. But unfortunately this letter was lost later on. The earliest letters in my file are dated 1947, but it not recorded when Mr Milne-Redhead first took me in hand some time in the 1930s. He became my regular correspondent and I owe him a big debt for all his teaching and encouragement. I would not have got far without them.

In November 1933, my sister-in-law kindly exhibited some of my drawings of Kenya flowers in one of the Royal Horticultural Society's fortnightly shows. I was awarded the silver-gilt Grenfell Medal. Unfortunately this did not bring me in any contacts as these shows always occur in the winter, and I had returned to Kenya in September.

I went on collecting during the second world war, at that time I was able to travel in Karamoja with Mr Wreford Smith. This encouraged my interest in Aloes. I had been put in touch with Basil Christian of Salisbury, Rhodesia, by Mr Milne-Redhead and he had been kind enough to name one after me, its type locality being Amudat. Later, after Mr Christian's death, Dr G.W. Reynolds took over the study of tropical aloes, and after sending him many plants I eventually in 1957 organised an expedition for him in Karamoja. The 1950s can hardly be called the early days, but pioneering conditions still prevailed there - rocky roads, dry or flooded watercourses, camp life. The results of this expedition were incorporated in Dr Reynolds book - "The Aloes of Tropical Africa".

The scope of my collecting has been increased in more recent times, thanks to my late husband. I went with him when he travelled extensively in parts of East Africa on his own affairs, and provided I did not make him late for his engagements he was always willing to wait patiently by the roadside while I hunted for plants. He was also willing to take me on safari and we made many short journeys to Karamoja and similar dry places.

I am now planning to return to England before I get too old to uproot myself, so my collecting days are nearly over.

Mrs D.R. Tweedie,
Box 215,
Kitale.

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MAGADI ROAD EXCURSION

On Sunday 23rd April 1972, twenty members gathered for a botanical excursion led by Mr J.B. Gillett of the E.A. Herbarium. A few days before Mr Gillett had been sceptical about the success of the trip because of the lack of rain, which of course normally would have been fairly heavy at this time of year and would have brought out flowers in profusion. However there were no lack of plants, and in particular the party was able to learn something about the shrubs growing at different altitudes.

The first stop was made at an altitude of about 1730m, where Mr Gillett pointed out how one can almost read the altitude and climate from the vegetation. Some trees such as the deciduous *Commiphora* (meaning gum-bearing) only grow up to a certain altitude. Here they were just beginning with *Commiphora africana*, a smallish tree with thick, hairy toothed leaves and *C. schimperi*, which has smooth leaves and aromatic sap. Both have the typical angular growth of the trunk and branches, often with flaking bark and with strong spines (modified stems).

Here we were also shown: *Cordia ovalis* with thick rough leaves and edible berries, rather insipid berries with a large pip, but the writer had no ill effects from trying them. A species of *Loranthus*, a common parasitic plant in drier areas, with showy red/yellow flowers. This plant is conspicuous by being able to flower nearly all the year round. It is pollinated by sunbirds, whereas insect pollinated plants only flower when there is an abundance of insects just after the beginning of the rains. Another group of bird-pollinated plants are the *Aloes*, of which we saw but a single species. The leader mentioned that since the aloes are a favouite food of elephants, they do not exist where there have been many elephants roaming in recent years.

A small example of *Combretum molle* was seen, this was growing in the lower range of its distribution with regard to rainfall, these trees being far more common in areas of somewhat higher rainfall, e.g. the Embu/Meru area. Some lush looking plants of the Liliaceae family - *Urgenia altissima* were in fact highly poisonous, which is no doubt the reason they had not been eaten by animals.

Various members of the genus *Grewia* were met with and Mr Gillett showed how the back of the leaves were covered with stellate hairs, one of the ways of recognising the family Tiliaceae to which *Grewia* belongs. At a lower level we saw a *Grewia* bush with berries, which are much eaten by primitive food gatherers and hunters.

Very few herbs were seen. One was *Launaea cornuta* a weed of the lettuce sub-family of the Compositae with milky sap. Others were a species of *Vigna*, several species of *Ipomoea* a climbing *Senecio*, and a species of *Helichrysum*. This genus normally grows at a much higher altitude and is found in abundance on the high mountains of Kenya.

The evergreen *Maerua triphylla* was pointed out, with dainty white flowers with ovaries on stalks. A small tree which looked very like an Acacia was noted, but without thorns. It was an *Ormocarpum* of the Papilionaceae family. Of interest too was the *Acacia brevispica* with small hooked thorns and white pom-pom flowers.

At a slightly lower level the tall thin *Acacia thomasii* was noted. It has thin wispy branches at the top and long racemes of white flowers, it is much favoured by Grey-headed Social Weavers *Pseudonigrita arnaudi* as nesting sites.

The next stop was at 1275m in really dry country. Here a very striking bush was *Acacia mellifera*, with small round leaves and viciously hooked thorns. Some were covered with beautiful white pom-pom flowers emitting a sweet perfume and with masses of insects swarming around. The latter part of the name means "honey-bearing", which was evident from all the bees around. Also seen was *Commiphora boiviniana* with large hairy pinnate leaves, new branches from the base and grey bark, a species met with generally in dry country and coastal areas through the Northern Province to Somalia.

We noted *Boscia* spp. with very stiff oleander-shaped leaves. On stony outcrops a member of the parsley family: *Steganotaenia araliacea*, one of the few members of this family that grows in hot dry country and, in such locations, grows into trees. A species of fig also grows on this sort of stony outcrop. They often become very large and it seems impossible that they should be able to find enough nourishment. These trees have a milky juice, and alternate leaves, and a line on the stems where stipules have fallen off.

Lunch was taken at 940m in the shade of an *Acacia tortilis* (because of its twisted seed pods) and later we saw several species of *Sansevieria*, the spiky fibrous plant which at one time was proposed for use where sisal is now grown.

In this area, *Delonix elata* a fine tree with large cream flowers turning yellow was frequent. In many parts of Kenya this is associated with Baobab, but none of the latter were seen here. An *Euphorbia*, growing on a vertical rock face was seen, a climbing *Cissus*, and many more, but it would be dull to go on listing them here, although for the members present it was most useful to have them pointed out.

At the last place where we stopped at 920m before turning back, there were on a rocky hillside a number of bushes of *Commiphora merkeri* with simple leaves. This species was described from northern Tanzania, and has so far only been found in two places in Kenya. Altogether six species of *Commiphora* were found.

The above, although common knowledge to botanical experts, was most interesting for the members on the trip dabbling in several branches of natural history, and we are most grateful to Mr Gillett for making it such an instructive and interesting day.

L.C.

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THE FORESTS OF WESTERN UGANDA

As most members of the E.A.N.H.S. live in Kenya, many may not be aware of the ease with which the outstandingly interesting forests of Western Uganda may be visited.

The birds are of interest because they include many species which are at the far eastern end of their range e.g. White-tailed Hornbill *Bycanistes fistulator*, Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis*, Forest Robin *Stiphrornis erythrothorax*.

The forests are also rich in primates and the reasonably fit and determined naturalist can hope to see Gorilla *Gorilla gorilla* (Kayonza forest), Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (especially easy Budongo Forest), Red Colobus *Colobus badius* (Kibale forest), L'Hoest's monkey *Cercopithecus lhoesti* and several other common species. Kibale and Bwamba are the habitat of several uncommon primate species.

For anyone interested in orchids both the forests and the surrounding savanna are rich indeed. Additions to the East African list and even entirely new species are still being found by enthusiasts. For epiphytic species Kalinzu and Budongo make for the best hunting because there are active felling operations in progress. The other vegetation is no less interesting to those knowledgeable, and to those that are not the coolness of the forest is pleasant and the infinite variety of plant forms can still be fascinationg. Kayonza forest, with an altitude which varies between 2500 - 1200m, probably shows the greatest variation in the vegetation. It includes Bamboo *Arundinaria alpina* Tree Fern *Cyathea deckenii* as well as typical lowland forest species such as Scented Mahogany *Entandrophragma cylindricum*.

The butterflies are superb in all the forests in the wet season. April is a good month in most years and September - October can also be highly productive in Kalinzu, Kayonza and Maramagambo. Wet seasons for Kayonza, Kalinzo, Maramagambo, Kashoya - Kitumi and Kibale are March - May and September - December. Bwamba and Budongo are wettest during March to October.

The Uganda Forest Department maintains nature reserves (undisturbed forest) in all it's main blocks of natural forest and is commendably conservation sensitive. The local staff are invariably helpful when approached for advice and can usually recommend guides if required. Most forests have Forest Dept. Rest Houses, which can be booked for sh.10/- per person per night, when they are not required by staff. Beds are usually provided but as there are only one or two it is better to carry one's own. The Rest House Keeper will generally provide firewood and water and may even do minor chores, such as washing up if requested (and tipped!). It is always possible to camp near these rest houses for no charge, if permission is requested.

BUFUMBIRA VOLCANOES. Stay at Travellers Rest Hotel, Box 1015, Kisoro or camp, or unfurnished forest rest house at base of Sabinio (apply D.F.O., Box 9, Kabale), gorillas now rarely seen, plenty of elephant and smugglers.
KAYONZA (IMPENETRABLE) FOREST. Stay at Ruizha Rest House (apply D.F.O., Box 9, Kabale), 2150m altitude. Anti-midge cream required. Guides for gorillas available (tough going), most other mammals rarely seen. Excellent forest-canopy bird watching from the road. Pit-sawing in progress.
KALINZU FOREST. Stay at Kalinzu Forest Rest House (apply D.F.O. Box 9, Mbarara). Approach from Mbarara - Fort Portal road 70km from Mbarara. Good driving tracks. Altitude 1550m, continuous felling in progress.
MARAMAGAMBO FOREST. Contiguous with Kalinzu but at the bottom of the rift. Altitude 1100m. Queen Elizabeth National Park control much of this forest and have put in a track which is only passable for ordinary cars when dry (usually January - February and May - August).
KIBALE FOREST. Stay at forest rest house (apply D.F.O. Box 21, Fort Portal). Excellent for monkeys especially Red Colobus *Colobus badius*.
KASHOYA-KITOMI FOREST. Difficult to get at or move within. No rest house and no cutting in progress.
BWAMBA FOREST. Stay at Forest Rest House, (apply D.F.O. Box 21 Fort Portal). An eastward extension of the Zaire Huri Forest. Rich in uncommon birds and animals. Very hot and humid, altitude 750m.
RUWENZORI FORESTS. Can be approached for a day trip through Kilembe Copper Mines by road, stay at Margarhita Hotel, Box 90, Kilembe. A more extended walking trip can be made via the normal route for climbing the mountains (details from the Uganda Mountain Club, Box 2927, Kampala).
BUDONGO FOREST. Noted for it's superb mahogany and it's chimpanzees. Stay at the Busingiro Forest Rest House (apply D.F.O. Box 173 Masindi) or Mr D. Baggaley's Guest House, Box 174, Masindi (self catering). Good for driving and walking tracks. Probably the best forest for an extended stay.

Graham Harrington,
Box 4, Mbarara,
Uganda.

NOTICE

Members are kindly requested to follow the simple "Notes for Contributors" printed inside the front cover of the *Bulletin* when sending in material. They are also respectfully reminded that East Africa uses metric measurements. Finally, they are asked to use the box number which is given on the front cover, inside the front cover and inside the back cover.

Ed.

NEST RECORD SCHEME - 1971

During the second full year, the scheme expanded as anticipated, so that 891 cards were completed for 1971 observations. A further 1196 cards were made out for earlier records, many of which give data for more than one "nest". Thus a total of 4904 cards were filed by the end of 1971 involving 616 species.

Past records are especially appreciated, and I would like to thank Capt. C.R.S. Pitman, L.H. Brown, A.D. Forbes-Watson, H.J. Lee and W. Colley for supplying interesting data covering all three countries. I am most willing to enter tabulated observations on to cards in the observer's name and would be grateful for further data of this type, however meagre.

Much of the increase in current records (from 491 in the previous year) is due to the efforts of John Beesley, mainly in the Arusha National Park. Thirty per cent or more of the cards containing 1971 data are his work, and his departure from Tanzania in May this year will be a great loss, leaving only two contributors in that country. John Reynolds (now in Nairobi) and John Beesley have, between them, accounted for over ninety per cent of our Tanzania cards, and it is feared that the response from Tanzania in future may be as poor as from Uganda during 1971, also with only two contributors. I am anxious to contact as many people as possible in these countries so that the scheme does not become a Kenyan rather than an East African scheme.

With the data now available for some of the more common species, breeding season and clutch size patterns are beginning to emerge. However, it is most important that contributors should continue to send cards for these common species since there can never be too many. We now have 109 cards for Dark-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* (but still only 6 for Nairobi!) and 64 for Fiscal Shrike *Lanius collaris*, yet a thousand or more of each would be desirable.

Since many observers have records from the past which they have not made available to the scheme, mainly due to their lack of spare time, it has been suggested that I list species for which we have no records at all for one or more of the three East African countries. Some of the species listed below are rare and it is unlikely that there are any records at all. On the other hand several of these species are not uncommon and there are definitely records which have not been published or made available. If members can help by supplying data on any of these species I would be most grateful to hear from them. Also it is possible that there are some published records which I have not extracted from the literature, and I would be pleased to have such references brought to my notice.

Lastly, I would like to make an appeal once again for new contributors, and to those members who have taken cards but not yet sent in any records.

K,U, T after a species indicates that there are no records for Kenya, Uganda or Tanzania respectively. The following list covers only about one third of the non-passerines and further lists will appear in subsequent issues of the *Bulletin*.

Pelecanus onocrotalus	White Pelican	u
Phalacrocorax carbo	Cormorant	T
Botaurus stellaris	Cape Bittern	T
Egretta ardesiaca	Black Heron	U
Ixobrychus minutus	Little Bittern	K
I. sturmii	Dwarf Bittern	U
Nycticorax leuconotus	White-backed ight Heron	K U
Ciconia episcopus	Woolly-necked Stork	K T
Bostrychia olivacea	Green Ibis	T
Anas capensis	Cape Wigeon	U ?
A. erythrorhynchos	Red-billed Teal	U
A. hottentota	Hottentot Teal	K U
A. undulata	Yellow-billed Duck	T
Oxyura maccoa	Maccoa Duck	U
Sarkidornis melanota	Knob-billed Goose	K
Thalassornis leuconotus	White-backed Duck	U
Gypaetus barbatus	Lammergeyer	U T
Gyps ruepellii	Ruppell's Griffon	U
Neophron percnopterus	Egyptian Vulture	U
Accipiter badius	Shikra	T
A. erythropus	Western Little Sparrowhawk	U
A. minullus	Little Sparrowhawk	U
A. ovampensis	Ovampo Sparrowhawk	U T
A. rufiventris	Rufous Sparrowhawk	U T
Aquila verreauxii	Verreaux's Eagle	U
Aviceda cuculoides	Cuckoo Falcon	U
Circaetus cinerascens	Banded Harrier Eagle	K U T
C. cinereus	Brown Harrier Eagle	U T
C. fasciolatus	Southern Banded Harrier Eagle	T
C. pectoralis	Black-chested Harrier Eagle	U
Circus aeruginosus ranivorus	African Marsh Harrier	U T
Hieraaetus africanus	Cassin's Hawk Eagle	U
H. dubius	Ayre's Hawk Eagle	U T
H. spilogaster	African Hawk Eagle	U T
Machaerhamphus alcinus	Bat Hawk	K
Melierax metabates	Dark Chanting Goshawk	T
Polemaetus bellicosus	Martial Eagle	U T
Polyboroides radiatus	Harrier Hawk	T
Urotriorchis macrourus	Long-tailed Hawk	U
Falco alopex	Fox Kestrel	K
F. ardosiaceus	Grey Kestrel	K
F. biarmicus	Lanner	U T
F. chiquera	Red-necked Falcon	K U T
F. fasciinucha	Teita Falcon	K T
F. tinnunculus	Kestrel	U
Polihierax semitorquatus	Pygmy Falcon	U
Sagittarius serpentarius	Secretary Bird	U
Coturnix chinensis	Blue Quail	T
Francolinus clappertoni	Clapperton's Francolin	U
F. levaillantii	Red-wing	T
F. shelleyi	Shelley's Francolin	U
F. streptophorus	Ring-necked Francolin	T

Ptilopachus petrosus	Stone Partridge	K
Grus carunculatus	Wattled Crane	T
Podica senegalensis	Finfoot	K U T
Eupodotis hartlaubii	Hartlaub's Bustard	K U T
E. ruficrista	Crested Bustard	U T
Neotis heuglini	Heuglin's Bustard	K
Otis arabs	Arabian Bustard	K
O. kori	Kori Bustard	U
Crex egregia	African Crake	U
Gallinula angulata	Lesser Moorhen	U
Porphyrio alleni	Allen's Galinule	U
Porzana marginalis	Striped Crake	U
P. pusilla	Lesser Spotted Crake	K U
Rallus caerulescens	Kaffir Rail	U T
Sarothrura boehmi	Böhm's Crake	U
S. elegans	Buff-spotted Crake	U T
S. lugens	Chestnut-headed Crake	T
S. pulchra	White-spotted Crake	K T
S. rufa	Red-chested Crake	K
Ortyxelos meiffrenii	Quail Plover	U
Turnix hottentota	Black-rumped Button-Quail	T
T. sylvatica	Button-Quail	U

Hazel Britton,
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REVIEWS

FLORA OF TROPICAL EAST AFRICA, Rhamnaceae. Published on behalf of the East African Community by the Crown Agents for Overseas Governments and Administrations, published 11th January 1972, The Government Bookshop, Box 569, London SE1 9NH. Price £0.35.

This part of the Flora of Tropical East Africa, by Marshall C. Johnston, M.A. Ph.D, appeared in the bookshops in the U.K. on 11th January 1972, and contains 41 pages including the map at the end. Dr M.C. Johnston deals with eleven genera, *Lasiodiscus* five species, and *Ziziphus* six species, the other nine genera only contain one or two species at most. They are trees, climbing or scandent shrubs, or lianes or subshrubs. Tendrils are present in the two genera *Helinus* and *Gouania*. The leaves are simple, alternate or opposite. The book contains 12 figures and they represent line drawings of all the genera dealt with in the flora. As usual the genera are fully described as well as the species to which there are keys. There is also a generic key which, along with the drawings, should be a great help in naming a Rhamnaceae. The geographical range of each species in East Africa is also given.

Economically, the fruits of *Ziziphus* are important because they are eaten in the fresh or dried state. *Maesopsis* has a valuable timber. It was introduced to Amani, Tanzania from Bukoba in 1924, where it grew very rapidly under an annual rainfall of 1830mm and they started fruiting about 1930 when they were distributed by giant forest hornbills and germinated freely. Trial plots were established by the Forest Department at Ndola, Zambia with the intention of using the boles as a flux in copper smelting. Cascara sagrada is obtained from the bark of *Rhamnus purshiana* DC., and trials of this have been made to establish it in East Africa but they have not been successful.

P.J.G.

LUO-ENGLISH BOTANICAL DICTIONARY by Dr J.O. Kokwaro. Published by The E.A. Publishing House, Nairobi. Price in East Africa shs.18/-.

To many products of the modern formal system of education, the immense wealth of environmental knowledge of the person brought up through the traditional system of African education is a constant source of a hidden sense of inferiority. Those concerned with modern education in development of the African mind have expressed anxiety with the modern scientific and technological world. It is now widely recognised that the problem of language is crucial in this gap.

The gulf of ignorance develops over the immediate environment as the child changes to use foreign terms for familiar things around him. Thus the wealth of environmental details known to our forefathers and which they used in their day to day life for food, medicine, shelter, defence and amusement cannot be described in the familiar language of the child's immediate environment. In no other field is this gap so crippling as in the field of biological sciences.

It is precisely this gap that Dr Kokwaro's book aims to fill. The rendering of the many vital botanical specimens in traditional language opens a world of immense importance to youth in knowing their environment as intimately as our ancestors did. Dr Kokwaro's work is but a beginning of many pioneering efforts by our scientists in this field and a truly vital educational contribution.

The book, attractively produced, is divided into two parts. Part I consists of an alphabetical arrangement of plant names in Luo, each name being followed by its botanical equivalent. A short description of each plant is given, including medicinal values, food values, poisonous effects, etc. A good number of plants are not only described but are also well illustrated as an aid to identification.

Part II of the book is of more general interest to all naturalists and everybody interested in the biology of East African plants. This section consists of Botanical-Luo and English-Luo lists of over five hundred scientific names of both indigenous and exotic plants found all over East Africa. Each scientific name is followed by its Luo equivalent and under the latter name, one can get a full English description of a species by referring to Part I. An important feature of the book is the up-to-date list of common English plant names in daily use by agriculturalists, biologists, foresters and all other naturalists working with plants everywhere in East Africa. The English names of both wild and cultivated plants are in alphabetical order in this section. Each English name is followed by its Botanical and

Luo equivalents. The Luo name equivalent is given in this section for ease of cross reference with the full description of the plant given in Part I.

Botanical language has a number of puzzling terminologies which normally make a plant description somewhat difficult to follow. Included in this section are brilliant illustrations of practically all descriptive botanical terms pertaining to a plant body. Additional useful information such as a key to types of fruits and a method of classifying plants in general are also included.

Many teachers and others interested in the field will find this timely volume a valuable aid to field studies in Botany and related ecological sciences.

S.H.O.

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DO YOU KNOW THAT:- PART II

spiders can fly! Young spiders of most groups move from the place of their birth by climbing up to an exposed position in the evening, turning their heads into the wind and releasing streamers of silk from their tails. When enough silk has been let out to support them, they let go and float away. They have been found at over 900m a.s.l., over 800km from the nearest land; and on the isle of Surtsey, which appeared off the coast of Iceland a few years ago, spiders were found within a few weeks of the eruptions which caused it. The discarded threads when the spiders come to land are known as gossamer which is sometimes very thick.

the "Mombasa Train" or Giant Millipede (? *Julus* spp.) is the only animal which can walk through a column of Safari ants *Dorylus* with no trouble. From above its many legs it puffs out hydrocyanic acid, the substance used in the "Gas Chamber" in some states of America. When the "Mombasa Train" approaches a column of these ants they fall back about 30cm smelling the acid which is lethal to most other forms of life. This proves to be a very efficient method of defence for the millipede, and if one is picked up an almond-like smell can be detected which is the acid being puffed out. For some reason the millipedes are preyed upon by genets and civets which do not appear to be affected by the spray.

man was not the first to make paper! Wasps, Vespidae, sometimes mistakenly called Hornets, of certain groups fly to a dead tree, fence post etc. chew off thin fibres of wood, pulp them, and add a secretion similar to caustic soda. They use the finished product (paper) in thin sheets to make their nests. These are the many celled nests which one sees hanging from buildings. The larvae, about 12mm long are white grubs, normally one per cell and are fed on insects. These have been stung by the adults and are then pulped in the same way that the paper is. The reason for pulping is that the young have no jaws and have to suck in the food. Also, the larvae never defecate. They keep the waste products in the skin which is shed three times before it reaches the adult stage.

new species of insects are still to be found in their thousands. In Rio de Janeiro, South America, there is a large statue of Christ above the city which is floodlit at night. From the virgin forest around the statue millions of moths fly every night to the lights. There are so many that twelve men are employed to sweep them off the 0.6ha platform, a task which takes them all day. A researcher from Rio University went to the platform every morning for two weeks and filled an empty shoe box with the moths. In working through this small collection, he found that he had just over 5000 new species. Similarly, in East Africa, about 5% of moths collected at lights are new to science.

over half of the known bugs, Hemiptera, are plant feeders, the most commonly known being the aphid or green fly. All the plant feeding bugs have a hollow tube under the head with which they pierce the tissues of the plants and suck the sap. In the larger species, one bug can remove 18 to 22l of sap per hour from a tree. From the sap they extract the salts essential for their survival, and the rest of the liquid passes straight through the body. Sometimes the liquid falls like rain under a heavily infested tree. The Pentatomid bugs are commonly known as "stink bugs" and send out an unpleasant odour on being disturbed, this is a means of defence. Some people think of all insects as bugs, whereas it is a moderately small group with about 48 - 50000 species world wide.

M.P. Clifton, Entomologist,
The National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

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MR JOHN COOPER ON HARRIER HAWKS

We heard a particularly interesting lecture on 8th May 1972 from Mr John Cooper on Harrier Hawks *Polyboroides radiatus*. Mr & Mrs Cooper have kept a pair in captivity for nearly two years. They were in brown juvenile plumage when acquired and in very poor condition. However, they recovered and are now moulting in to adult plumage. It was originally intended to release them, but it proved impossible to get them used to a free life and they were constantly having to be rescued. Nor did it prove possible to train them like falcons. They preferred to hang upside down from the wrist rather than stand upright upon it, and were very nervous. A hood would calm their nerves, but there was the ever present danger of their escaping with the hood on. Altogether it has proved better to keep them in captivity and use them for scientific study. Their nervousness has made it necessary to erect screens round the aviary and this also made them very difficult to handle for study purposes, as they became extremely upset, struggled and inflicted wounds on the handlers. This difficulty has been overcome by giving them an injection similar to that used when handling and moving game animals. A bird's high metabolic rate makes it respond very quickly to the drug and very quickly recover, and during the interval it can be handled without danger to the investigator or distress to itself. It can be weighed, measured and examined and even a biopsy taken.

A curious side effect of the anaesthetic is that the bare skin of the face which is normally yellow, blushes pink. Mr Cooper noticed that this also occurs during courtship. Members will recall that the Hooded Vulture

Neophron monachus also blushes pink according to the blood supply.

Mr Cooper also showed photographs of the young birds when conscious and standing up. One, showing the feathers at the back of the head puffed out, made the bird look curiously like a young Bateleur Eagle *Terathopius ecaudatus* but I do not think this mistake could be made in the field. The long bare, thin face and long legs make the Harrier Hawk look very different from the stout and stocky Bateleur. The Harrier Hawk is very specialised for its particular mode of life, much of its hunting is done hanging upside down from weavers' nests or searching holes in trees while the wings clasp the trunk. Both the long thin head and the feet are used to pull nestlings out, and the "ankle" joint lacks the usual stop and can be hyperextended, making it look "double-jointed". Mr Cooper would be grateful if anyone finding a dead Harrier Hawk, even if decomposed, would send it to him at the Veterinary Research Laboratory, Kabete as he is anxious to dissect this joint. Altogether it was a most informative and unusual lecture and we are very grateful to Mr Cooper.

P.M.A.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

BLACK-HEADED GULL IN UGANDA

It may be of interest to record that on 28th March 1971, while leading a Uganda Society trip to Kibanga Port (*c.* 40km south-east of Kampala on the shore of Lake Victoria), I observed an adult Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* in breeding plumage. It had a dark head (though I was unable to check that it was chocolate rather than black) and the darkness did not extend as far as the back of the neck as in the Little and Mediterranean Gulls, *L. minutus* and *melanocephalus*. It had the white blaze typical of the species, in fact the pattern is slightly different from that of the Grey-headed Gull *L. cirrocephalus* and this difference was noticed when it was compared with the Grey-headed Gulls with which it was associating.

Dr Pearson (*in litt.*) assures me that this is the first Uganda record of a Black-headed Gull for which any details are available. It is however mentioned in the Uganda National Parks Handbook (1971, 5th edn.) as occuring in Queen Elizabeth National Park, but apparently no details are available to support this statement.

Incidently, with reference to Captain Pitman's letter in the March issue of the *Bulletin*, I assume his reference to many records of the Yellow-bellied Greenbul *Chlorocichla flaviventris* nesting at Entebbe must be a misprint, as it does not to my knowledge occur anywhere in Uganda, (Mackworth-Praed & Grant). The Yellow-throated Leaflove *C. flavicollis*, however, is common at Entebbe.

Roger Frankum,
Kibuli Secondary School,
Box 4216, Kampala, Uganda.

Sir,

The following two breeding records of uncommon birds in the Budongo Forest, western Uganda, may be of interest as they are not recorded in Mackworth-Praed & Grant.

12th April 1972, Blue-throated Rollers *Eurystomus gularis* feeding a single, free flying young bird. The young bird was duller than the adults in all respects, including the bill colour.

Rufous Flycatcher *Stizorhina fraseri* nesting on a tree stump about 2m from the ground by the side of a path through otherwise undisturbed *Cynometra alexandri* forest. The nest was constructed of roots and moss and was unlined. On 17th April 1972, the nest contained two eggs, the white ground colour virtually obscured by red-brown and purplish blotching. On 25th April, the young were present, well grown and covered in grey down.

G.N. Harrington,
Box 4, Mbarara,
Uganda.

Sir,

On the evening of 27th April 1972, at the University Sewage Ponds (Dar) I saw a Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris* fly up to a tree and without landing, remove a fruit of *Ancylobthrys petersiana* (Apocynaceae) of at least 2.5cm in diameter. I was unable to follow the bird through the thick bush and cannot say if it actually ate the fruit. I am unable to find any reference to fruit forming any part of any kingfisher diet and would welcome information or comment from your members. The plant was identified by Dr B.J. Harris, Botany Department, University of Dar es Salaam.

Norman Gardiner,
University of Dar es Salaam,
Box 35063, Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania.

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RINGING NEWS

We shall need to have a fresh supply of ringing schedules printed within the next six months or so. I mention this so that you, the ringers can let me have any suggestions for improvements. The abbreviations for gram and millimetre will be corrected as will the spelling mistake (chick ick) and the novel numerical order on the second side!

The ringing report 1970/71 is greatly delayed, mainly due to the *Bulletin* commitment, however I hope to submit the MS to the Hon. Editor in June and he assures me that, as a Society report, it will have priority over other papers and will be published with as little delay as possible.

On 30th June the ringing year comes to an end and schedules become due: please send me all schedules including incomplete ones as early in July as possible. If you have not ringed any birds this year please let me know.

G.C.B. Ringing Organizer,
Box 29003, Kabete.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Sunday 4th June, 1972: Afternoon "Wildflower Walk" led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m.

Monday 12th June at 5.15 p.m.: Mr D. Turner will give an illustrated talk on "MADAGASCAR, THE GREAT RED ISLAND", in the National Museum Hall.

Sunday 18th June, 1972: Visit to Mtaro Estate (between Ruiru and Thika) by kind invitation of Mr & Mrs F. Hartmann. It is intended to study birds and plants in the area round a dam and in the deep river gorge. The latter is steep and will entail some climbing over large boulders. Please bring picnic lunch and meet Mr & Mrs Campbell at the National Museum at 9.00 a.m.

Sunday 2nd July, 1972: Mr Peter Britton will lead a trip to the Heronry at Kisumu, this is the trip that was postponed from 14th May, the birds are now nesting and by early July birds will be feeding young. Please see the April issue of the *Bulletin* for instructions, and inform Mr Britton, Sawagongo Sec. School, Private Bag, YALA, if you wish to come. In particular he asks that members should indicate whether they will have a person to watch the camp on the Sunday.

8th/9th July (7th): Bushwackers Safari Camp. Please see May issue of the *Bulletin*. Bookings to: Mrs Jane Stanton, Bushwackers Safari Camp, KIBWEZI.

10th July, 1972 at 5.15 p.m.: Mr J.F. Reynolds will give an illustrated talk on "INTIMATE GLIMPSES OF AFRICAN BIRD LIFE", in the Museum Hall.

Wedensday Morning Bird Walks meet every week at 8.45 a.m. in front of the National Museum. Led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno.

Dates for future functions:

(4th), 5th - 6th August, 1972: Ngobit Camp. Details in July issue.

14th August, 1972: Mr J.B. Gillettt of the E.A. Herbarium will give an illustrated talk on "Plant Identification".

11th September, 1972: Professor P.A. Robins will give an illustrated talk on "CAVE PAINTINGS IN SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AFRICA AND EUROPE".

16th - 17th September, 1972: Camp in the forest belt on Mount Kenya.

9th October, 1972: Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson will give an illustrated talk on "BIRD LIFE ON THE INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS".

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NEW MEMBERS - JUNE

Full Members:

Miss Jennifer Berger, Box 29147, Kabete, Kenya.
Mr R.A. Hack, The British Council, Box 40751, Nairobi.
Mr P.L. Hankin, c/o African & Alpine Safaris, Box 20224, Nairobi.
Mr Sven Lindblad, Box 48559, Nairobi.
Miss M.I. Muller, Dutch Med. Res. Centre, Box 49370, Nairobi.
Mr & Mrs N.A. Searle, Box 46505, Nairobi.
Mrs I. Stoltz-Ostrom, Box 44391, Nairobi.
Mr M.M. Taylor, Dagoretti High School, Box 21070, Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5 × 23 cm (10 × 8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5 × 23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN JULY 1972

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ON THE NESTING HABITS OF WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATERS *MEROPS ALBICOLLIS*

In April 1972 I made my first visit to Lake Magadi (Kenya) and kept a special look out for breeding White-throated Bee-eaters *Merops albicollis* as Van Someren (1971) had recorded breeding on the Esonorua flood plain between Nairobi and Magadi in April 1971.

I started seeing White-throated Bee-eaters on the Esonorua flood plain and thereafter found them to be widely distributed between there and Shombole. I briefly watched most birds I saw for signs of breeding and eventually found a loose colony breeding in a dry sandy 'mbuga' about 3km from the south west shore of the lake.

All four nests found were excavated in sandy soil, two of them being dug under grass tussocks. Banks, although available close to the sites chosen, had not been used (c.f. Praed & Grant - "Nest: In holes in a bank."). During digging of the tunnel and nest chamber the soil is obviously kicked backwards to form a mound whose centre is eroded by the birds landing, entering and leaving the nest. The final form of the mound is, therefore, more that of a small wall around the entrance that would certainly prevent flooding of the tunnel during moderate storms. When found all the nests contained well-feathered young that were being fed at the tunnel entrances. At least one other pair were feeding fledged young.

The first nest was found on 8th April and was about 30cm from another nest (found as No.3 on 11th April). As the birds did not seem worried by the proximity of my Land-Rover I erected a hide at the working distance of 1.83m: it was accepted immediately.

On 9th April I was in the hide from 07.30h until 12.25h. The young were spending long periods at the tunnel entrance but usually only one was present at a time. At 09.25h the fledgeling at the entrance suddenly flew away. While I was in the hide 32 feeding visits were made to the nest and I suspect that the flying member of the brood was also fed after it had left the nest.

When I entered the hide at 07.30h on 10th April there was no sign of the adults and no sounds were heard from the nest. Adults passed over calling at 07.50h whereupon a fledgeling came scrambling up the tunnel and called. Thereafter, one or other of the young birds, sometimes calling, often appeared at the entrance. At 09.00h the one at the entrance caught and ate an ant. Five minutes later an adult brought food. Further feeds occurred at 09.13h and 09.18h. At 09.23h two young birds appeared. The second to emerge pecked at the other which promptly flew away. The remaining bird was fed at 09.28h, 09.30h, 09.31h, 09.37h and 09.38h. It flew from the tunnel at 09.42h. No more young appeared nor were any more calls or scufflings heard from the nest. At 09.52h an adult came to the nest with food, peering down the tunnel and repeatedly calling before flying away. As it seemed certain that the whole brood had departed I came out of the hide and took it down.

Towards dusk I saw activity near the tunnel and, after dark, when I shone a torch down the tunnel I heard subdued calling. No birds were seen returning to this nest on subsequent evenings. At nest No.4 which was observed until dusk on 15th April no adults were seen to enter the nest for roosting.

After dismantling the hide at nest No.1, I found another (No.2) about 1.6km further along the mbuga. This contained young about a week younger than those in the first nest. A hide erected on 11th April was not accepted so when I found nest No.4 about 90m from nest No.2 I started working the hide up from a distance in the orthodox way, reaching working distance at 15.00h on 13th April.

While observing the bee-eaters reactions to the final move of the hide I realised that visits were being made by at least three birds. Two, the presumed parents, had fully adult plumage with long central tail feathers while the third could be distinguished by having no long tail feathers. I could not see any other plumage differences nor are any apparent in my Agfacolor and Kodachrome transparencies. Later I found that there were two helpers without long tail feathers, one being distinguishable by having what looked like a piece of dried mud on it's back. This helper was far more assiduous in it's visits than the other which I only saw for certain on four occasions. My records of feeding visits are summarised in Table 1; unfortunately, for various reasons, it was not always possible to score the identity of a feeder as parent or helper. Morning records were made from the hide and afternoon ones from the top of a cliff overlooking the nesting ground; from this vantage point it was often possible to keep individual birds under separate observation. The feeding pattern is probably not entirely normal as one of the parents never completely ignored the lens and sounds of camera operation. Sometimes this bird would remain perched near the nest (both when the hide was occupied and when it was empty) holding food for up to half an hour while one or more members of the group took food to the nest. For example, on 16th April the shy adult perched in a tree 9m from the nest at 16.20h but did not deliver its food until 16.55h although it swooped over the nest several times calling before returning to the tree; the other parent fed at 16.29h, 16.38h, 16.41h, 16.48h and 16.54h. Both parents fed at 16.56h after which I was not able to separately distinguish them. While I think it most probable that this behaviour was a reaction to the hide, the swoops might have been an attempt to "persuade" the young to leave the nest. A reduction in feeding visits when the young are near to fledging has been recorded in *M. bulocki* (Fry 1972).

During 28.5 hours observation I recorded a total of 429 feeding visits, giving a feeding rate of one visit per 4.0 minutes. Fry (*op.cit.*) in a dawn to dusk period of observation at a nest at Lake Chad recorded 128 visits by parents and 87 visits by five helpers, three of whom made 85 visits. Taking dawn to dusk to be 12 hours these figures give a feeding rate of one visit per 3.3 minutes. The ratio of helper to parent is 1:1.5. Unfortunately my data for this aspect cannot be compared directly with Fry's as I was not able to identify the feeders in 109 visits. In Table 2 I have calculated the helper:parent ratio for five different estimates of the identity of these 109 feeders. These figures are, of course, purely speculative but do show that the assistance given by the helpers was of the same order of importance as at Fry's nest.

Dr. C.H. Fry (*in litt.*) informs me that the helpers at his three Lake Chad nests were all long-tailed; six out of nine helpers sexed by dissection after shooting were males. As there are no known cases of double broodedness in any species of *Merops*, he thinks it most likely that my short tailed birds were juveniles from last year's breeding season rather than from an immediately previous clutch which would have had to be laid in late November or December. The possibility of two broods cannot, however, be definitely excluded and breeding birds should be watched for by any observers visiting Magadi from October onwards. By ringing, he (Fry, *op. cit.*) has shown that in *M. bulocki*, helpers(which are usually one-year-old males) are sometimes siblings and sometimes, perhaps usually, the offspring of the adults whom they assist.

At nest No.2 I had seen four birds posturing at each other on 12th April. At the time I interpreted this as an attempt by one pair to usurp the nest belonging to pair No.2. After seeing helpers at nest No.4 I realised the true nature of what I had seen but was unable to make any detailed observations at nest No.2. However, at 18.30h on 15th April, while watching nest No.4 from the cliff top, I again saw four birds at nest No.2 though I was too far away to see whether all were feeding. I cannot say whether these presumed helpers were short tailed or long tailed but I believe they were probably the latter as I think that I would have noticed the absence of tail streamers when I saw the birds displaying on 12th April.

Feeders and nestlings were both very vociferous at all nests. At nest No.4 feeders usually called when approaching the tree in which they perched before going to the nest. Here they would call again until answered by a young bird which would usually have responded by coming to the tunnel entrance if not already there. Frequently the food was given very rapidly (a major reason for not always being able to identify the feeder) especially when the nestling was some way down the tunnel. At other times there was almost a tug of war and it was almost as if the feeder was trying to entice the younger bird to leave the nest. The feeder usually departed immediately but sometimes waited by the nest, often calling, for half a minute or so. Once a parent and both helpers were all on the ground by the entrance while the other parent was "hammering" a large beetle in a nearby tree.

No attempt was made to record the various insects brought as food for the young birds. Grasshoppers were probably the most frequent prey items but butterflies, moths, beetles, dragonflies, thin-waisted wasps and bees were a all frequent victims. Occasionally insect larvae, mainly caterpillars, were brought. Prey was either captured very close to the nest (when visits might follow with great rapidity, e.g. visits by parents at 11.42h (two), 11.43h (two), 11.44h and 11.45h on 15th April) or at considerable distances from it (180-400m). Some prey was captured by true aerial sorties but many of the bee-eaters in this mbuga specialised in snatching insects, especially beetles, from the tops of plants about 1m tall. In the bare parts of the mbuga, stones were often used as perches for spotting insects on the ground.

A greeting ceremony in which the wings were opened and the head raised was observed both at nest No.4 and elsewhere, including nest No.2 where, as already described, it was misinterpreted as threat display. At nest No.4 it was seen between an adult and a helper while in the tree under which I was camped I often saw it as a prelude to what I took to be courtship feeding between birds with long tails; none of these feeds were followed by copulation.

TABLE 1

Summary of feeding visits to a nest of *M. albicollis*
P = parent, H = helper, ? = not separated, T = total
– = no observation

PERIOD OF OBSERVATION	13 April				14 April				15 April				16 April				17 April			
	P	H	?	T	P	H	?	T	P	H	?	T	P	H	?	T	P	H	?	T
07.30-07.59h	–	–	–	–			4	4	4	1	3	8	0	0	0	0	8	4	4	16
08.00-08.29h	–	–	–	–			4	4	4	1		5	1			1	10	7	1	18
08.30-08.59h	–	–	–	–			8	8	6	4	3	13		1		1	6	3	3	12
09.00-09.29h	–	–	–	–			2	2	5		1	6	3		4	7	6		1	7
09.30-09.59h	–	–	–	–			6	6	5		1	6	5	1	8	14	3		1	4
10.00-10.29h	–	–	–	–	1	2	2	5	4	2	1	7	3	3	4	10	3	2	5	10
10.30-10.59h	–	–	–	–		1	1	2	10	2		12	8	3	2	13	6	1	1	8
11.00-11.29h	–	–	–	–	1		4	5	5	4	2	11	3	1	3	7	13	3	4	20
11.30-11.59h	–	–	–	–	3	2	4	9	6	3	2	11	10	2	4	16	5	1	1	7
12.00-12.29h	–	–	–	–	4	3		7	9	2		11	4	1	3	8	4	1	2	7
12.30-12.59h	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	4		9	9	3	5	17	6	4		10
13.00-13.29h	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8	5	4	17	–	–	–	–
13.30-14.00h	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	7		9	–	–	–	–
15.30-15.59h		2		2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
16.00-16.29h	3	3	1	7	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2			2	–	–	–	–
16.30-16.59h	2			2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7			7	–	–	–	–
17.00-17.29h	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	1		5	4	2		6	–	–	–	–
17.30-17.59h	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–					4			4	–	–	–	–
18.00-18.29h	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–					3	1		4	–	–	–	–
18.30-19.00h	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–					–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
28.5 hours	5	5	1	11	9	8	35	52	67	24	13	104	76	30	37	143	70	26	23	119

Total parental visits	227
Total helper visits	93
Total not separated visits	109

Grand Total: 429 feeding visits in 28.5 hours

TABLE 2

Estimates of the ratio of helper to parental feeds at a nest of *M. albicollis*

POSSIBLE IDENTITY OF 109 UNIDENTIFIED FEEDERS	REVISED NUMBERS OF PARENTAL & HELPER FEEDS		RATIO OF HELPER TO PARENTAL FEEDS
	PARENT (2)	HELPER (2)	
1/4P, 3/4H	254	174	1:1.5
1/3P, 2/3H	263	165	1:1.6
1/2P, 1/2H	281	147	1:1.9
2/3P, 1/3H	299	129	1:2.3
3/4P, 1/4H	308	120	1:2.6

Fry (*op. cit.*) describes the whole brood of *M. bullocki* as generally leaving the nest within a few hours but does not mention any "exploratory" flights followed by a return to the nest such as I saw at nests Nos. I and 4 of *M. albicollis*. I do not know whether the departure I saw from nest No.I on 9th April was a first flight or not but I am reasonably certain that I saw the first flight from nest No.4. On 15th April at 12.45h the young bee-eater at the tunnel entrance suddenly took off, flying to the tree used as a perch by most of the feeders where, after landing rather clumsily on a single horizontal branch, it was fed at 12.48h. It then flew out of sight but came back to the nest at 13.43h making an extremely clumsy "belly landing" to one side of the nest where it was joined by a parent at whose tail streamers it pecked. It then flew back to the tree which it left ten minutes later to land accurately in front of the tunnel entrance down which it scuttled. The following day there was no reason to believe that any of the young had left when I entered the hide at 07.30h. At 12.29h the young bird at the entrance flew up to the perch I had provided by the nest (to facilitate photography), stayed there a couple of minutes and then returned to the nest.

J.F. Reynolds,
Box 40584, Nairobi.

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Van Someren, G.R.C. (1971) Breeding of White-throated Bee-eaters *Merops albicollis*. *E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1971:162-163.

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A KENYA RECORD OF THE SOUTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER

MEROPS NUBICUS NUBICOIDES

On 14th June 1972 we observed two adult Southern Carmine Bee-eaters in a stunted acacia tree at Lake Kanyaboli in the Nyanza Province of Western Kenya (0.3'N., 34.10'E.). We were able to watch them at as little as 6m range for several minutes before they flew away calling. Both were in fine plumage, and identification presents no problem with either form of *Merops nubicus* if a reasonable view is obtained. As far as we know this is the first Kenya record of *Merops nubicus nubicoides*.

The two forms of the Carmine Bee-eater have often been considered distinct species, although most authors now consider them conspecific. Typical *nubicus* breeds in the northern tropics and *nubicoides* in the southern tropics, both moving to lower latitudes in the non-breeding season. There is however no overlap in range and no mixing of the two populations despite the fact that *nubicus* extends well south of the Equator. Their quite disjoint ranges are well shown by Moreau (1966:185).

Nubicoides is an off-season visitor to much of extreme western Tanzania and southern Zaire, north to about 4.0'S. at the north end of Lake Tanganyika (Moreau *loc.cit.*). Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1957) note that it moves north in April and south in September, while Chapin (1939) has shown that all dated Zaire records fall within the months April to August. In fact Chapin recorded parties in Kivu in early July so that, *pace* Moreau (*loc. cit.*), it may well be regular to north to about 2.0' or 3.0'S. The recent Kenya birds are not the first instances of wandering well beyond its normal off-seaon range since Chapin mentions an analogous July Zaire specimen from the Lower Uelle at 2.48'N. Both records are from close to the normal southern limit of typical *nubicus* as shown by Moreau (*loc. cit.*), and both are of adults.

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MADAGASCAR, THE GREAT RED ISLAND

ILLUSTRATED TALK BY Mr D. M. TURNER

On 12th June Mr D.M. Turner gave us a most interesting talk on an expedition which he made with Stuart Keith and Alec Forbes-Watson to Madagascar. It must have been a hard trip. Besides many miles in a Land-Rover over bad roads, much of the work had to be done in thick forest where even to see the birds was difficult enough and photography almost impossible. Nevertheless some excellent photographs were taken, especially of birds caught in mist nets, which was often the only way of seeing them, and the rest of the lecture was illustrated with plates from the magnificent book by Milne-Edwards and Grandidier (1879-85).

Mr Turner called Madagascar "the great red island" because the central plateau has been completely deforested and is badly eroded so that the red soil shows through. We learnt something of this process and its effect on the lemurs from Dr Alan Walker two years ago. The destruction continues, and it is good to learn that the Government has set aside some reserves. There is a great variety of habitat. The south west is very dry and there is a strip of rain forest up the eastern side of the island, which is particularly thick and inaccessible in the north. In other parts there are lakes and patches of forest. The island is almost a continent in itself with its own particular fauna. The common birds are different from those found elsewhere. Kestrels *Falco newtoni* are numerous in the farmland, but they are not the same as those we see on the mainland of Africa. Wagtails *Motacilla flaviventris* are common, but they are not our wagtails. Some groups have few representatives, as Pigeons, Parrots and Sunbirds. (There is also a false Sunbird *Neodrepanis* whose affinities seem obscure.) Madagascar has its own subspecies of Egret (race *dimorpha*) and an Ibis *Lophotibis cristata* so strangely shaped and luridly coloured that when its picture was shown a fellow-member leaned across and whispered to me that "surely they have made that one up".

Other groups have proliferated and developed forms to fit a variety of niches. Most interesting perhaps are the Mesites, a family akin to Rails, the Ground Rollers (a strange idea to us, accustomed as we are to the aerobatics of our own rollers), the Couas, a subfamily of Cuckoos, perhaps more akin to Coucals, as they are not parasitic, and the Vanga Shrikes. These last have developed many different forms. One, *Falculea palliata*, has a long curved bill with which it takes insects out of bark like a Wood-hoopoe; one *Euryceros prevosti* has a large casque on the bill like a Hornbill, though most likely it does not eat fruit; and one *Hypositta* is like a Nuthatch, *Sitta*.

The Vangas live in the trees, but most of the other endemic forms live on the ground, or on the forest floor. One got the impression of a rather silent world. The Vangas whistle, but do not seem to share the fine songs and clear notes of their relatives over here. Perhaps during the breeding season there is more song; but it is almost impossible to visit the main habitats then, as it is a time of torrential rain. It is no wonder that there is still so much to be found out about these fascinating and puzzling birds.

P.M.A.

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ANOTHER BUTTERFLY MIGRATION

Mr Cunningham - van Someren's note in the *Bulletin* (May 1972) on a massive butterfly migration prompts me to record details of a much smaller migration which I witnessed recently.

On 10th February 1972 at 10.30h I was engaged on fieldwork in a large glade in the *Acacia xanthophloea* forest about 3km south of Lake Nakuru when I realised that there was a steady passage of butterflies that had probably been in progress for at least an hour before I took any notice of it. It was still continuing, though at a reduced rate, when I left the area at 11.15h. I noted the following information at the time. The butterflies were mainly medium sized and white, with 10-20% rather smaller and pale yellow. It was not possible to catch any specimens as the insects were flying at an estimated 15km/h at a height of 1.5-3m above the ground with unusually level and direct flight. They were going up-wind in a north-westerly direction. I counted the butterflies per minute passing between me and a tree in unobstructed view 60m away. The mean of five counts was 31 (range 10-50) which would be equivalent to the passage of approximately 500 butterflies per minute per km of migrating front.

The weather was sunny after a shower (0.8mm) during the night; a further 2.7mm of rain fell in the area in the afternoon. The temperature was 22-25C at the time of the observations. I am grateful to Mr R.C. Long for permission and facilities to work on his land.

R.M. Newson,
Box 29006,
Kabete.

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FRUIT-BATS AND BAT-FLOWERS

I appreciated very much Mr Cunningham - van Someren's (1972a & b) notes on *Rousettus aegyptiacus* pollinating *Kigelia* flowers, as I myself found three other species of fruit bats visiting flowering *Kigelia* trees in the central Sudan, I therefore included all African records of this little known habit of fruit bats (Kock 1969).

As my paper is in German (but available at the Museum Library, Nairobi) it may be useful to repeat the records here to shed light on what is already known and what can be studied in Kenya. Several of the species involved occur in Kenya, and most of them in East Africa. As it is difficult to observe exactly if fruit bats actually pollinate while searching for nectar or eating part of the flowers, a neutral account is given; anyway, pollination of flowers is unintentional on the part of the bats.

1. *MEGALOGLOSSUS WOERMANNI:* visiting unidentified flowers in Zaire (Eisentraut 1965) and *Kigelia* at Mt. Cameroon (Eisentraut 1963). This fruit bat is morphologically perfectly adapted to lick nectar from flowers; it has a long snout and an extremely elongated tongue with specialised papillae on it. Besides this species there are several other African fruit bats, but with an only moderately elongated or even short rostrum and an apparently normal tongue, visiting flowers without showing typical morphological adaptations.

2. *NANONYCTERIS VELDKAMPI:* observed on flowers of *Ceiba* and *Parkia* by Baker & Harris (1957) in Ghana.

3. *MICROPTEROPUS PUSILLUS:* on *Kigelia* flowers in Ghana (Harris & Baker 1958, 1959) and collected from these flowers in Kardofan (Kock 1969).

4. *EIDOLON HELVUM:* mentioned by Rosevear (1965) on *Parkia* in West Africa; on *Adansonia* in Senegal (Jaeger 1945, 1959), on *Adansonia* and *Ceiba* in Ghana (Baker & Harris 1957, 1959): on *Parkia* & *Chlorophora* in Uganda (Mutere 1966); on flowers of *Bombax* in Liberia (Eisentraut 1945); I shot it from *Kigelia* flowers in Kordofan (Kock 1969).

5. *EPOMOPHORUS GAMBIANUS:* on *Parkia* and *Ceiba* in Ghana (Baker & Harris 1957, 1959).

6. *EPOMOPHORUS LABIATUS ANURUS:* netted between *Kigelia* flowers in Kordofan after observing their determined flight towards a single tree (Kock 1969).

7. *EPOMOPHORUS* sp.: (probably *wahlbergi*) visiting flowers of *Adansoni* in Kenya (somewhere in Tsavo region) were shown in A. Root's movie "Baobab". As far as I know this is the first film record for Africa (the film was on German television with quite an attendance), and the first Kenya record of bat pollination.

8. Of the second Kenya bat species recorded as pollinators by Cunningham - van Someren (1972a), *Rousettus aegyptiacus*, we have further information: Porsch (1935) knows it as a visitor of *Eriobothrya* flowers, Kaisila (1966) saw it in Cairo at *Bombax* flowers and a handwritten note in a photocopy of Matschie's (1899) catalogue of fruit bats gives *R. aegyptiacus* as visiting *Musa* flowers in Cairo (Kock 1969).

The overall total is eight bat species visiting flowers of eight plant genera, either originally African or imported, sometimes only regionally within Africa. Botanical research by Porsch (1935) and especially recently by Vogel (1958, 1968, 1969a, 1969b) led to the conclusion that pollination by bats is a phenomenon to which the relevant plants are perfectly adapted. Thus, by terms or speed of evolution it is equivalent to pollination by birds. Bat pollinated flowers have certain morphological and physiological characters in common, such as distant position on the plant for easy access by bats, opening at dusk, no obvious colours and dull, but apparently specific odours.

An important fact is that bat pollinated flowers of the Neotropics possess very similar convergent morphological characters, and that imported plants (like *Kigelia*) are readily accepted by the local flower-visiting bats. But in the New World no fruit bats (Megachiroptera) are to be found. There, the ecological niche for bat pollination is occupied by bats which developed their ability of visiting flowers by convergent evolution from a totally different parental stock of bats (Microchiroptera). Many of them are species of the subfamily Glossophaginae (Phyllostomidae) with long tongues and these species can be arranged in an evolutionary series of species possessing an increasingly longer rostrum and tongue. Incidentally, a comparably convergent evolution is found amongst the Neotropical frugivorous bats where the megachiropteran niche is occupied by originally insectivorous phyllostomid bats showing, in their recent species, a tooth pattern which seems convergent to Old World Pteropidae (fruit bats, suborder Megachiroptera).

Vogel (1958) indicates that the plant genera *Markhamia, Kigelia* and *Ipomoea* very probably contain species with flowers visited by bats. For *Kigelia* several observations have been made since in Africa. - *Kigelia* distribution is not the same as that of *Rousettus aegyptiacus*. In large parts of the Sudan this bat does not occur, but *Kigelia* grows; *Musa* is certainly not a native of Egypt, but *R. aegyptiacus* is. Bats can migrate, e.g. *Eidolon helvum* in Uganda, Sudan and West Africa and *Epomophorus wahlbergi* in Natal; they can always find alternative food resources when the plants concerned are not flowering (or fruiting). The bat flowers are not as highly specialised as to be visited or accepted by only one species of fruit bat (Hawk Moths, Spingidae and *Galago* spp. have been observed on bat flowers). As far as can be said up till now, the interrelations of bats and plants seemed to be based on an elastic and fairly broad basis.

Cunningham - van Someren (1972b) furthermore observed that *Rousettus aegyptiacus* chews leaves of *Erythrina*, but stomach contents of the bats captured were not examined. In the Lebanon the very same species is known and proved to feed on leaves of *Ficus religiosa* Lewis & Harrison 1962); this occurs when the fruits are rare, as in winter. These two records cannot be compared as the reasons for the leaf feeding are probably very different, but it does show that *R. aegyptiacus* accepts leaves under certain conditions.

In my opinion, the water (fluid) requirement is a very important factor in bat biology, accounting for nectar feeding (and sugar = energy for metabolism). There are quite a number of records of bats which have been captured above water surfaces and several observation showing that African bats actually take up water. But as bat studies are still scarce, I can cite only two definitive records for African fruit bats (Megachiroptera) observed to drink: Wahlberg (1858) saw an *Epomophorus* sp. and Rousselot (1950) observed *Eidolon helvum* drinking. Records for microchiropteran bats are comparatively more frequent (e.g. Dorst 1960 for several species in Senegal, Start 1966 for Kenya; Kock 1969 for several species in the Sudan). – I found *Kigelia* flowers to contain approximately 1ml of nectar with a weakly sweet taste and of a specific odour (of course this statement may be very different between individual observers).

Finally, a last point from Cunningham – van Someren's notes needs a few comments: the *R. aegyptiacus* observed by him were roosting in bamboo clusters, but this fruit bat is the only African species resting in caves. Two related species (*angolensis* and *lanosus*) never rest in real caves, as they lack ultrasonic orientation ability which would be necessary in the complete darkness of caves. As both species occur in Kenya (Harrison 1962) it cannot be ruled out that some other species were involved in the observations made.

It is to be hoped that this commentary demonstrates a little of the general biological importance of such observations and how little is actually known of bat biology. If these notes lead to further interest in field studies by our readers I would suggest that specimens of the bats concerned be collected and preserved. I would be willing to examine and identify the material collected and to return part of it to the National Museum, Nairobi for further reference.

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REVIEW

MOSQUITOS by D.J. Gillett. The World Naturalist. London:Weidenfield and Nicolson.

COMMON AFRICAN MOSQUITOS AND THEIR MEDICAL IMPORTANCE by D.J. Gillett. London: William Heinemann Medical Books Limited.

These two new books, just received, both by Professor D.J. Gillett of Brunel University, who worked for many years in East Africa and was at one time Assistant Director of the Virus Research Institute, Entebbe.

"Mosquitos" is an extremely readable and very fascinating account of mosquitos in general with some emphasis on East Africa. There are chapters on each stage of the life-history from egg to larva, pupa and finally the imagine, followed by mating behaviour and oviposition. Also dealt with is the interesting evolution of flight, the use of sound waves for the detection of mates and how food, nectar and blood, is found by mosquitos, whether in the Arctic Circle or in the Tropics or even by an association with ants.

Chapters on the diseases carried by mosquitos are important and contain a wealth of up-to-date information. One aspect dealing with the transmission of various arborviruses should be noted by field ornithologists who might decry the collection of birds for medical research purposes. As Professor Gillett shows, some birds are the reservoir or a link in the chain of the cycle between mosquito and man and his domestic stock. Similarly a new look is required at the part played by various mammals from monkeys and galagos to rats and even donkeys, for these act as reservoirs of important diseases transmitted to man. All is admirably described without the use of scientific verbiage but the names given to some of the virus types, such as "O'nyong-nyong", are real tongue twisters.

The second book is purely African and it is dedicated to an outstanding African pioneer in the mosquito field, Yovani Ssenkubuge, who I have had the pleasure of knowing for nearly thirty years. This book is intended for students, field workers and Health officials, the non-experts who wish to know the commoner mosquitos they are likely to encounter and may have to deal with. The coloured illustrations by Dr Judith Smith, of 48 selected species are excellent and will make identification easier. Opposite each illustration, in concise form, is a description of the species and those closely related and similarly patterned, together with information on breeding places, distribution and their possible role in disease transmission.

A more than useful book, even if limited to the selected 48 common and more likely to be met with species. To ensure the availability to the people for whom it is intended, the price has been kept low due to a substantial grant from the Wellcome Trust.

I wish these books had been available thirty years ago when I had the task of training staff for mosquito work, but then we did have the classics "Mosquitos of the Ethiopian Region", Parts I. II and III by Hopkins, Evans and Edwards, respectively, now virtually unobtainable and nearly worth their weight in gold!

G.R. C - vS.

FIELD TRIP TO MTARA ESTATE

On Sunday 18th June over 40 members enjoyed a most sucessful field trip to Mtara Estate, between Ruiru and Thika, by kind invitation of Mr & Mrs Hartmann. Mr Hartmann is well known in the Society and his photographs of animals and birds and their surroundings are a perpetual joy. On this occasion, after gathering at the house, the party went to look at a nearby dam and its surroundings, returning to eat picnic lunch in the garden. Then Mr Hartmann took us in the other direction past the coffee factory and down into a magnificent gorge. The river running at the bottom was overshadowed by splendid *Newtonia* trees and figs *Ficus* spp. and the banks covered with ferns, balsam *Impatiens* and other plants many brought down by the river from higher altitudes. Many of the party scrambled over the rocks to a place where the river disappears underground for a space and there is a cave full of bats. Altogether there was a wealth of things to see and consider.

About fifty species of birds were listed, of which the following should perhaps be specially mentioned: on the edge of the dam a Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris* was seen and a downy chick, presumably its young. A dead adult was also found. The chick crouched down and did not move even when picked up, it had the black spots and white nape patch mentioned by Praed & Grant. The wing feathers and tail were in quill. The tail, elongated by tufts of down, looked particularly strange on a downy chick. Round the dam we were puzzled by the call of the Cape Quail *Coturnix coturnix africana* whose ventriloquial powers are noted by Jackson. Whichever way you go the call seems to come from a different direction. The identification was later confirmed with the help of Myles North's record. In the Newtonias as seen from the top of the gorge a Green-headed Sunbird *Nectarinia verticalis* was new to most people. At the bottom of the gorge some Cinnamon-chested Bee-eaters *Merops oreobates* were hawking over the river and at intervals plungeing down onto the surface of the water with a smack and a splash; but we were too far away to see what they were catching.

P.M.A.

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AT NJORO

On Friday 14th April my sister, my mother and I went to Nakuru where we met our friends the Browns and their two boys. We later went on to their house at Njoro, on the Seth-Smith's farm.

The following afternoon we went down to Lake Nakuru and saw Pelicans and Flamingos. Robert Brown went out to some little islands in the water and on one of them he saw three Marabou Storks eating a flamingo.

When we got back to the house we found seven window panes had been broken. We asked the servants what had happened and they said that birds had broken them, they told us the name in Kikuyu and we were looking them up in books.

Mrs Brown then rang up the Seth-Smiths and they said "oh yes! they are Ground Hornbills *Bucorvus cafer*. They broke the windows in our office in 1969." The next morning we woken up by "BANG BANG" and we saw three Ground

Hornbills. We ran after them with the dog and they flew off and we thought they were gone for good. Then we put a mirror outside for a decoy.

The next morning we went for a walk and saw lots of Red-headed Parrots *Poicephalus gulielmi* and Colobus Monkeys *Colobus polykomos*. Then my mother, Robert Brown and I went to see how charcoal is made. When we got home we found three more panes broken and that the birds had pecked at the mirror. We did not see them again.

Rowena Marshall,
Box 14476,
Nairobi.

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HERONRY AT NJORO

About four months ago Black-headed Herons *Ardea melanocephala* began nesting in conifers bordering Njoro high street just opposite the Post Office. Mrs Bruce reports that she was told that children had been climbing the trees to collect eggs but, despite this, on 26th April there appeared to be at least a dozen nests with the same number of almost fully fledged young nearby. Mrs Bruce hopes to interest the Wild Life Club at Njoro School in observing this heronry and perhaps encouraging the local people in taking a pride in it and its preservation.

Joan Standish King,
Box 40058,
Nairobi.

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BARN OWL PELLETS

A pair of Barn Owls *Tyto alba* are resident on the top of the masonry pillars at the main entrance to Nairobi National Park. Pellets disgorged and found at the base of the pillars were collected between November 1971 and January 1972. The National Museum kindly identified the following small mammals from skulls and bones contained in the pellets :

Otomys sp.- Swamp rat, *Praomys jacksoni* - Short-haired rat, *Dendromus* sp. Tree mouse and *Crocidura* sp. - shrew; there were also wing cases from Scarab beetles and one unidentified pelvic bone from a small bird.

C.E. Norris,
Box 42406, Nairobi.

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MARTIAL EAGLE KILLING A YOUNG GRANT'S GAZELLE

On 2nd April 1972, in the Nairobi National Park, my attention was attracted to a disturbance in some longish grass, which revealed itself to be a tussle between an adult Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* and some small animal.

On approaching closer, it was possible to see that the animal being attacked was a recently born Grants Gazelle *Gazella granti* which was frantically kicking with all four legs at the eagle; feathers were flying and the eagle was receiving quite a buffeting, making it lose its grip. The calf, obviously badly wounded, managed to stagger away in a dazed state; the eagle then swung itself into the air to deliver a further attack. It was interesting to note the bird did not swoop down on to the calf's back, but came down and then swooped upwards so that its talons could obtain a grip of the chest. Within minutes, the calf was lifeless and limp but, even so, the eagle did not relax its grip.

The eagle's chick, a bird of the year as its head was pure white, was dancing about squealing encouragement at the prospect of a meal. Upon our approach the young bird flew up into an Acacia tree still squealing. The parent stood defiantly on the body of the calf but, eventually, flew up to join the chick. The calf had been killed by the penetration of one of the hind toe talons into the heart; there was a neat hole well placed over the heart which had caused severe haemorrhage from the mouth and nose.

C.E. Norris,
Box 42406, Nairobi.

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RED-WING STARLINGS

On 24th April 1972, two Red-wing Starlings *Onychognathus morio* were observed taking food to a nest on the ledge below the architrave of the window of the Kenyatta Avenue Standard Bank, facing Wabera Street and nearest to Standard Street. One flew away with what looked like a faecal sac.

Joan Standish King,
Box 40058, Nairobi.

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REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Mr V.O. Nielson reports seeing an Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* on the Athi River 10km E. of Bushwackers Safari Camp wearing metal plates on its wings. Its companion was not marked. Mr Nielsen saw the marked bird on 3rd June1972. Would anyone who knows anything about this bird please contact me?

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

FLAGGED PELICANS

Nearly on hundred young Great White Pelicans *Pelecanus onocrotalus* and nineteen Abdims Storks *Ciconia abdimi* have been marked in Ethiopia recently: each bird was given a bright pink flag 10cm long on itsright leg and a numbered metal ring on the other leg.

Anyone seeing one of these birds is asked to write to Prof. E.K. Urban, Biology Dept. Faculty of Science, Haile Sellassie I University, Box 1176, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with full details of date, locality, number of marked birds present and any other pertinent information.

Ed.

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Sir,

BIRD STILL A MYSTERY

I am very grateful for Mr Forbes-Watson's reply in the April 1972 issue of the *Bulletin* (p.68) to my call for help in trying to identify a bird I saw in the Impentrable Forest, Uganda last October. It looks as if my description was misleading. I do not think this bird was the Ruwenzori race of the Abyssinian Hill Babbler *Alcippe abyssinica atriceps*, according to my field experience. This bird's bill was definitely that of a waxbill, short, thick at the base and very pointed. The bird looked similar to Mackworth-Praed & Grant's line drawing of the White-collared Olive-back *Nesocharis ansorgei*, on page 1033 of Vol.2., but the colours do not fit. I agree that my colour description is very close to that of the babbler but the shape, especially of the bill is significantly different.

The previous afternoon I had watched a small party of these babblers move up through the dense undergrowth on a hillside in the same area around Ruhizha and their noisy, bustling behaviour seemed quite different from this lone bird that was moving quietly through the foliage of the upper branches. Last December I wrote to Dr Herbert Friedmann in Los Angeles about this bird and he too found my description confusing. He suggested that it might possibly be a female Black-faced Rufous Warbler *Bathmocercus cerviniventris*, but there again its bill does not fit what I saw, and as he said - its back is not rusty brown. I have seen three or four of these warblers and they do not appear to fit the bird I saw last October. Maybe I should close the case and let the poor creature go in peace.

CASSIN'S HAWK EAGLE ?

As many of you will know, Uganda is blessed with many magnificent forests and I have spent much time over the past two years trying to track down its many elusive inhabitants. Our home overlooks the Kifu Forest and we are only a few kilometres from the Mbira Forest. We still have a few trees on our hill from the forest which covered this area a few years ago. On 20th September, 1970 Roger Frankum and I saw a fairly small eagle with a long tail fly over our house. It appeared to have a white breast without any dark streaks, spots or blotches. The upper parts appeared dark and the tail could have been indistinctly barred, at least it did not appear to have any large, distinctive bands. It was also too small to be the African Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus spilogaster*.

John Williams, in his book on the National Parks of East Africa p.232, says the Cassin's Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus africanus* is only recorded in East Africa fro the Impenetrable Forest. Mackworth-Praed & Grant say it is not recorded from E st Africa at all, so I left the bird. Then last October, while spending a few days in the Kibale Forest about 15km south east of Fort Portal, I saw a similar bird soaring fairly low over the forest. Just five weeks ago I saw what appeared to be a third example soaring over the middle of the Mabira Forest about 55km east of Kampala and 8km off the main Jinja road. These birds also fitted the description of the Cassin's Hawk Eagle. The only eagle Jackson records for the Mabira forest in his "Birds of Kenya Colony and the Uganda Protectorate" is Wahlberg's Eagle *Aquila wahlbergi* but we slso saw in the forest that day a lovely pair of Crowned Hawk Eagles *Stephanoaetus coronatus*, and if you can believe it, a pair of Bateleurs *Terathopius ecaudatus* perched high on a dead tree in the middle of the forest! I realise this last observation looks very questionable, but that was what they were!

About two weeks ago, I received a copy of *Contributions in Science* No.195 published in July 1970 by the Los Angeles County Museum. In it John Williams and Herbert Friedmann report the results of an expedition to the Kalinzu Forest, south-western Uganda. They collected three examples of Cassin's Hawk Eagle in eleven days suggesting that in this forest it is not so rare. It could well be that the three birds I have seen were in fact Cassin's Hawk Eagle even though it has never been recorded east of western Uganda.

Peter Hamel,
Box 4, Mukone,
Uganda.

Sir,

DOMED NESTS IN LARKS

While I was on leave in England last year, I received the following letter, dated 30th July 1971, from Professor J.M. Winterbottom of the Percy Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town in connection with my note "Unusual Nest of Flappet Lark" in *E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1971:95 :-

> "With reference to your note in the *E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* for June, take a look at the latest edition of Roberts Birds of South Africa. You will find, I think, that domed nests are not so infrequent among larks as you appear to think."

Since arriving in Nairobi I have been able to consult Roberts and other references in addition to Praed & Grant and V.G.L. van Someren's "Days with Birds", who make no reference to this type of nest. It would appear that domed nests are sometimes built by several African species of *Mirafra* but that, on present evidence, the habit can only be regarded as extremely sporadic in East Africa.

J.F. Reynolds,
Box 40584, Nairobi.

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APPEAL

Some help is needed in the Library. Anyone who can spare even 2 or 3 hours a week is asked to get in touch with the Librarian, National Museum, Box 40658, Nairobi, Tel.20141. Help is also always needed during the last week of each month when the *Bulletin* is being brought out. Anyone who can spare any time during that week is asked to contact the Librarian as above

PLEASE HELP

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CORRECTION

Bulletin 1972.p.100 para.2 line 5: for "look well in water" read "Last well in water".

THE SPECIAL FUNDS

In response to a question at the A.G.M. held in March this year, details of the two special funds are given below :

CHAMPION FUND : Mr A.M. Champion, president of the Society from 1949 - 1950 left shs.600/- to the Society when he died in 1951. His Solicitors told the Society in 1956 that the money was for field research. Half of the money was used in 1957 to help pay for the publication of Pinheys' paper on Emperor Moths. At present shs.3691/60 remains in the fund.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL FUND : This started as a gift of shs.1000/- from Sir G. Beresford-Stook towards the cost of publishing the *Journal.* At present the Fund stands at shs.2538/00.

Ed.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

2nd July, 1972 : Visit to the Kisumu Heronry.

8th/9th July (7th), 1972 : Bushwackers Safari Camp. Bookings to Mrs Stanton, P.O. Kibwezi. There are still a few camp sites available.

10th July, 1972 at 5.15 p.m. : Mr J.F. Reynolds will give an illustrated talk on "Intimate Glimpses of African Bird Life" in the Museum Hall.

15th July, 1972 : Saturday afternoon Bird Walk. Please meet at the National Museum at 2.30 p.m.

5th/6th August (4th), 1972 : Weekend Camp at Ngobit, *c.*240km from Nairobi, by kind invitation of the Carnegie Family. Campers should be self-contained with camping equipment and drinking water. Firewood will be available. The camp will be at approximately 2250m. There will opportunities for bird and animal watching and trout fishing. If weather permits an excursion to the Aberdare Forest for 4-wheel drive vehicles. Members are welcome on Friday 4th. If you intend to come, please fill in the enclosed slip before 15th July in order to make it possible to inform our hosts of the numbers to expect. Route instructions will be sent as soon as possible after receipt of your slip.

14th August, 1972 at 5.15 p.m. : Mr J.B. Gillett of the E.A. Herbarium will give an illustrated talk on "Plant identification". In the Museum Hall.

11th September, 1972 at 5.15 p.m. ; Professor P.A. Robins of the University of Nairobi will give an illustrated talk on "Cave Paintings in Southern and Eastern Africa and Europe". In the Museum Hall.

16th/17th September, 1972 : Camp in the forest belt of Mount Kenya. Details later.

9th October, 1972 at 5.15 p.m. : Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson will give an illustrated talk on "Bird Life on the Indian Ocean Islands". In the Museum Hall.

28th/29th October (27th), 1972 : Camp at Lake Elmenteita on Coles farm. Details later.

12th November, 1972 : Excursion led by Mr A. Duff McKay on Small Mammal Identification. Details later.

13th November, 1972 : Lecture by Dr G.M.O. Maloiy on "Animal Physiology in Drier Areas." In the Museum Hall.

4th December, 1972 : Lecture by Dr J.B. Sale on "Hyrax and Elephants", this will be illustrated. In the Museum Hall.

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NEW MEMBERS - JULY

Full Members:

Miss M.K. Baker, Lirhanda Girl's Secondary Secondary School,
Box 87, Kakemega, Kenya.
Dr D.M. Blankhart, Medical Research Centre, Box 49370, Nairobi.
Dr H.C. Fry, Department of Zoology, University of Aberdeen,
Tillydrone Avenue, Aberdeen, AB9 2TN. Scotland.

With issue of the *Bulletin* we are enclosing a copy of our brochure and form of application for membership. You are reminded that new members can join the Society for 25/- during the last half of the year. Perhaps you can think of someone who would like to join. If not please put the brochure up on some notice board, in your office, club or school. We should like everyone in the country at least to have heard of the Natural History Society.

Secretary,
Box 44486, Nairobi.

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WANTED

Leak Stereo Amplifier (or similar). Please contact Tecwyn Jones, Box 30148, Nairobi. Tel. Kikuyu 2121 ext.208 (day), ext.229 (evening).

"FOR SALE" ITEMS

The Society is happy to include "For Sale" or "Wanted" items in the *Bulletin*, however members should indicate a price when selling.

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RINGING REMINDER

Please send your schedules (or a postcard if you have not ringed any birds this season) to me in early July. Thank you.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
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Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

An interesting discussion took place at the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the Society. It was prompted by a comment by one of the Committee Members to the effect that some members of the Society felt that the *Bulletin* was losing its purpose as it was now too scientific and had lost its "chatty" feeling.

I must admit that I was rather surprised at this comment. I suspect that when people say "too scientific" they mean "too technical". So the purpose of this letter is to ask all of you to let us have your opinion on the subject.

May I make a few points which should be borne in mind when you write:

1. The E.A. Natural History Society is primarily a scientific society.
2. There is nothing in the *Bulletin* which is not understandable, though it is obvious that not everything in it will interest all the members all the time.
3. All the material in the *Bulletin* comes from the Society's members; so you make the *Bulletin* what it is. The Editor only edits.
4. If you think that it needs more "chatty" articles, are you prepared to contribute them? I am sure the Editor would be delighted to publish them.

I hope that you will respond to this letter in large numbers. By all accounts, the *Bulletin* is a success and is greatly appreciated by our members. Please help us to make it even more the kind of publication you all want.

Please send your letters or postcards to me in the first instance, at the address given below. I should like to hear from as many of you as possible, including those who are satisfied with the *Bulletin*. Do please send us your views. Thank you.

John Karmali,
President, E.A.N.H.S.,
Box 42202,
Nairobi.

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TWO UNUSUAL TERN SPECIES IN DAR ES SALAAM

On 10th June, 1972 I was watching a flock of about 40 Lesser Crested Terns *Sterna bengalensis* on a sandbank near the shore of Msimbazi Creek esturay in Dar es Salaam. The tide was rising fast and the sandbank was the only remaining exposed sand. As the terns were collecting there, I watched them with 10 X 50 binoculars from about 25m.

Among the Lesser Crested Terns was a single Swift Tern *Sterna bergii* in non-breeding plumage and two Sandwich Terns *Sterna sandvicensis* also apparently in non-breeding plumage. The Sandwich Terns appeared a little larger than the Lesser Crested and rather longer necked and longer legged. In the tight pack they stood out above the main flock with the Swift Tern. They also appeared rather paler than the Lesser Crested and Swift Terns particularly when I eventually saw them in flight. Their bills were long and narrow, completely black except for pale yellowish tips. Their feet and toes were black. Their crowns and napes were black flecked with white on the forecrown and with white foreheads. The rest of the plumage was white with a greyish wash on the mantle and wings and darker grey primaries. I am familiar with this species in Europe but this is the first time I have seen them in Tanzania. Peter Britton *in litt.* has suggested that they may have wandered northward from more usual "wintering" quarters off South Africa where a few birds are present all the year round.

Just before the flock were forced to leave the sandbank they were joined by a much smaller, darker tern. It looked like a rather squat immature Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* but was much darker grey above and with an almost black wing shoulder. The bill was short and black as were the feet and toes. The nape and crown were black, the forehead and forecrown white. The underparts were very pale grey but not white. The tail was quite deeply forked but with no streamers and greyish in colour becoming darker grey on the mantle and wings. I feel this was probably an immature White Cheeked Tern *Sterna repressa*, again the first I have recorded on this coast although William's Field Guide suggests that it is a regular visitor.

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar es Salaam.

Neither of these species are recorded for Tanzania by Backhurst & Backhurst (1970) A Preliminary Check List of East African Birds nor by Forbes-Watson (1971) Skeleton Checklist of East African Birds, and *S. sandvicensis* is unrecorded for East Africa.

Ed.

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BLACK - HEADED GULLS AT LAKE RUDOLF

The winter of 1971-72 has seen a substantial invasion of small gulls into eastern Africa. While there is some confusion as to the identity of many, both Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* and Slender-billed Gulls *L. genei* have possibly occurred (*antea* 1972:pp. 41 & 42, 67-68 and 87; G.C. Backhurst *in litt.*). We can give further records from Lake Rudolf, although they do little to resolve the confusion.

On 19th March 1972 we saw about 40 small gulls in ones and twos along 10km of shoreline at Ferguson's Gulf. They were in (first) winter plumage and C.H.F.'s immediate reaction was that they were not *L. ridibundus* and were likely to be *L. genei*. Mr A.J. Hopson, who during the previous weeks had seen no small gulls on Rudolf other than Grey-headed *L. cirrocephalus*, independently found some gulls on 19th March which he identified as *L. ridibundus*. In the following fortnight we all saw occasional *L. ridibundus* in full breeding dress, although the majority of small gulls were in 'winter' plumage. Much the same situation prevailed during the visit by P.L. & H.A. Britton and C.F. Mann to Ferguson's Gulf during the second and third weeks of April, 1972; they estimated 50-100 birds in the Gulf area and thought that they were all *L. ridibundus* although only a few were in partial nuptial plumage.

Having watched *L. ridibundus* in the field on his return to Britain and inspected skins of *ridibundus* and *genei* at the British Museum (Natural History), Tring, C.F.H. is now inclined to think that all the birds he saw on Rudolf were the former species. But there are some anomalies and we cannot dismiss the possibility that there were some winter *L. genei* there as well. The trouble is that *L. genei* is such a poorly-known bird. Harber, 1962 *Br. Birds* 40: 169-171 and Anon., 1969, *Birds of the World* 1 (4): 1026-1027, discuss the field identification of this gull in comparison with the very similar winter *L. ridibundus*. Most of the Rudolf winter-plumaged birds resembled typical *ridibundus* in most respects, but they were very variable and, in brief, the 'difficult' characters (of some individuals) were as follows (*g* = *genei*, *r* = "usual" *ridibundus*) :

1. Voice unlike *r*.
2. Size slightly greater than *r*.
3. Beak stouter than in breeding plumaged *r*, sometimes longer, and in all birds bright crimson-red with the distal 1cm blackish. This conforms neither with adult *g* (long decurved all-dark-red beaks) nor with first winter *r* (dull orange, blackish tip) nor with adult winter *r* (all crimson).
4. Legs and feet bright red (1st winter *r* yellow-flesh, adult winter *r* crimson.
5. Forehead profile like *r* (rounded), not *g* (flat). Neck like *r* (short), not *g* (long, attenuated), but some variation in silhouette and stance was noted.
6. The dark brown subterminal tail band was often bleached pale brown and in at least one bird the brown vanes of the retrices had disintegrated. A museum skin of *g* was similar (Port Etienne 1936.7.3.37) but no *r* skins were like this. The condition may be related with the

high alkalinity of the water of Rudolf; some Lesser Brown-necked Ravens *Corvus ruficollis edithae* there were similarly bleached pale brown.

C.H. Fry, & Jenny Horne,
Dept. of Zoology, Box 21247,
University of Aberdeen, Nairobi.
Tillydrone Avenue, Kenya.
Aberdeen AB9 2TN,
Scotland.

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KENTISH PLOVER T LAKE RUDOLF

A NEW SPECIES FOR KENYA

On 19th March 1972 we saw a single Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* at Ferguson's Gulf, Lake Rudolf. It was feeding on an expanse of dry mud flats and thin grass sward in the company of a few Ringed Plovers *C. hiaticula* and Greater Sand Plovers *C. leschenaultii*, and many Kittlitz's Plovers *C. pecuarius* and other waders. Being familiar with Kentish Plovers and not realising their scarcity in East Africa we failed to take a detailed field description, but we think that the following few notes allow no doubt as to identification. Good down-sun views were had at about 15m and the bird was noted to be en adult male with decidedly rufous crown (separated from the forehead by a well-demarated black band), small black mark on the sides of the breast, and dark legs. Its size was intermediate between *C. hiaticula* and *C. pecuarius*. It was not seen to fly and no voice was heard. During our two weeks' stay at Ferguson's Gulf, until 31st March, comparison was s afforded by three more species of *Charadrius* present. In addition, Mr and mrs A.J. Hopson have seen White-fronted Sand Plovers *C. marginatus* there, and suggested that our bird might be this species. *C. alexandrinus* and *C. marginatus* are similar and closely allied within the genus, but the tawny breast of *marginatus* (in winter, pale rufous sides only of the breast) seems to rule out this identification.

C.H. Fry, & Jenny Horne,
Dept. of Zoology, Box 21247,
University of Aberdeen, Nairobi,
Tillydrone Avenue, Kenya.
Aberdeen AB9 2TN,
Scotland.

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CORRECTION

Bulletin 1972. p.116 para 4 line 1 for "30cm from another nest" read 30m from another nest.

Ed.

A PROBABLE GREAT FRIGATE BIRD *FREGATA MINOR* IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

Although recent reports seem to suggest that Frigate Birds *Fregata* sp. are regular visitors to the Kenya coast in small numbers, there appear to be very few published records for Tanzania. On several occasions non-ornithologists (particulary yachtsmen) have told me of birds they have seen off the Tanzania coast which were probably frigate birds, but until 27th June 1972 I had never seen any myself.

On this day at about 1800h I walked out of a building in Zanaki Street in the middle of Dar es Salaam and was amazed to see a frigate bird soaring low over the roof tops. It soared round in great circles about 50m above the ground. With the naked eye I could clearly see the shape of the white on the underparts and the long straight pale coloured bill but fortunately I had a pair of 10 X 50 binoculars in my car nearby. With these I was able to get the following description from about ten minutes observation.

The bird appeared about twice the length of a Black Kite *Milvus migrans* with much longer angled wings and a long forked tail. I was not able to see its upperparts but the undersides of the wings were very dark chocolate brown with an indistinct paler brown line along the line of the underwing coverts. The lower belly and tail were of a similar colour; the tail having a fairly deep fork which was only occasionally displayed in flight. The upper belly and breast were clear white extending as lobes onto the axilliaries and also apparently onto the sides of the neck. The head (apart from the throat) and nape were black. The throat and foreneck were rather dusky white contrasting both with the black head and white breast. The effect of the pale throat and half white collar was to give a capped appearance. The bill was very long and straight with a distinctly hooked tip and appeared yellowish-grey in colour. I did not see the feet nor the eye colour.

Recent correspondence in the *Bulletin* emphasises the great difficulty in identifying frigate birds. However the dark head and dusky white throat together with the white underparts suggest that my bird was an adult female Great Frigate Bird *Fregata minor*, one of the two species most likely to be seen on the East African coast. The only previously recorded sighting of this species (*F. minor*) which I can trace from Tanzania is that of A.F. Morrison in October 1951 near Dar es Salaam, *Tang. Notes Rec.* (32).

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar es Salaam.

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CORRECTION

Bulletin May 1972:p.72 para.8, the fifth line was omitted completely, and thus the distributions of the described species read inaccurately - it should read as follows:

The distributions of described species of *Marsilea* in East Africa can be summarised as follows: Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda(*M. gibba*, *M. macrocarpa*, *M. minuta*); Kenya and Tanzania only (*M. coromandeliana, M. farinosa*); Kenya only (*M. botryocarpa, M. glomerata, M. megalomanica*); Tanzania only (*M. distorta, M. nubica, M. subterranea*).

Ed.

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SOME NEW RECORDS FOR TANZANIA NATIONAL PARKS

Preliminary Checklists of the birds of the Serengeti and Ruaha National Parks have been published by Tanzania National Parks. These lists do not claim to be comprehensive and are based mainly on rather sporadic collecting and observation, often in the vicinity of Park Headquarters. During visits made to Serengeti, Ruaha and Mikumi National Parks I observed the following birds not listed in the published lists. Full details of the Mikumi and Ruaha records were given to the Park Wardens.

MIKUMI:

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* - small parties, including adult males, were seen near Park Headquarters during two visits in early and late May 1971. This is a surprising record as Park Headquarters are only at 550m a.s.l. and the species is normally found above 1500m.

RUAHA:

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*
Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
Little Stint *Calidris minuta*
Red-faced Crombec *Sylvietta whytii*

SERENGETI:

Parasitic Weaver *Anomalospiza imberbis* - this species was common in open grassland near Seronera in mid-December 1969.

J.F. Reynolds,
Box 40584,
Nairobi.

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FOR SALE

Tanganyika Notes and Records: The following numbers are available from The E.A. Meteorological Department, Box 30259, Nairobi.

1940 (9), 1946 (21/22), 1947 (23/24), 1948 (25/26), 1949 (27),

1950 (29), 11951 (30). Price sh.7/50 per copy.

The publications are in good condition and each issue has its original paper cover. Offers should be addressed to the Librarian at the above address.

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DO YOU KNOW THAT: PART LII

sausage flies, the harmless light brown insects which come blundering into lights at night are male safari ants - *Dorylus affinis* the small one and *D. fulvus* the larger one. The males are on their courtship flights, looking for the wingless females which they track down by scent. It is assumed that the sensory receptors of the male are located on the antennae, as in most insects. A pairing of these insects has never been seen so it not known how the male overcomes the natural reaction of the workers to kill anything with a strange smell. Without the workers, the female safari ant is completely defenceless. The Queen is jet black and about 5cm long: of this, the head and thorax occupy about 1cm while the large carrot-shaped abdomen takes up the rest. As the Queen lays eggs on the move she has a special flattened plate at the end of her abdomen so that the eggs drop on to this and are not lost. The workers who transport her also remove the eggs to further back in the column where they are carried by other workers. In a matter of weeks these eggs hatch out into workers. The Queen is able to move under her own power, but this is very slow as her legs are rather short, and the weight of the abdomen holds her back, therefore several hundred workers form a ball round her (the size of a football) and carry her rapidly from one end of the column to the other. The carrying of the Queen is very rarely seen and is usually done at night; during the day she remains hidden under the roots of a tree or bush to one side of the column as it goes by. At the height of the dry season the column halts and forms a nest as do normal ants; this nest is very inconspicuous, usually being under the roots of a tree or bush. The only way to find a nest at this time is to look for the workers coming out to forage. The column also moves during the wet season and this, it is believed, is in order to search for food for the many young. If one 'safari' comes across the scent of another, the first will immediately turn aside. Foraging parties will often leave the main column or nest to look for food. These parties can be distinguished from the main column because they pass a given point in about an hour; the main column can take from 24 - 36h to pass. The workers and the Queen are completely sightless, the male - the sausage fly - is able to see to a small extent.

butterflies of certain groups, particularly the Hairstreaks Theclinae have filamentous 'tails' on the hind margin of their hind wings, closely associated with a black spot on the lobe which is at 90° to the wing. This mark simulates the head of the insect. To make it appear even more realistic, the butterfly moves its wings up and down, causing the 'tails' to wave around like antennae. A predator, attacking the butterfy, will usually go for this part of the wing. This gives the butterfly a chance to escape. Such simulation is also present among the *Charaxes* butterflies, and it is thought to be the basis of 'tails' in the *Papilio* (Swallow-tail) butterflies.

when mantids Mantidae pair, the male is in great danger. In *Sphodromantis lineola,* one of the common large green mantids found in East Africa, the female attacks the male and eats into the eye until she reaches the optic nerve. The male then throws up his wings, the female releases him and he jumps onto her back and pairing begins. Experiments at the British Museum (Natural History) have shown that the male will not pair until his optic nerve has been hit. Very often, the female will turn her head, which is more mobile than that of most other insects, and will continue her feast on the male while mating is in progress. From the physical structures of the male mantid, it would appear that this 'wedding breakfast' is normal. At his tail end there is a special nerve centre almost as large as the brain which carries on the vital processes as the female eats him. Once she has started, the female completely devours the male, and usually enough food is taken in from this meal to enable the first batch of eggs to be laid.

Insects need to warm up before flight. In the early morning, butterflies are often seen with their wings open, basking in the sun. This is to enable the insect's tissues, particularly the wing muscles, to exceed the lower threshold temperature of about 13 C. Butterflies can only fly above this threshold temperature. Most night-flying moths vibrate their wings for the same reason; their threshold temperature is about 7 C.

M.P. Clifton, Entomologist,
The National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

VISIT TO KISUMU HERONRY

For the few members from Nairobi, who braved the long distance to Kisumu and beyond, this was a memorable visit indeed.

The road to the heronry turns off a few kilometres east of Kisumu, and here we met some Kisumu members of the Society. The walk over the flat old lake bed was in itself interesting birdwatching and provided several 'firsts' on the bird lists. Different species of *Euplectes* (bishops) in brilliant breeding plumage were seen, and there were numerous Black-headed Gonoleks *Laniarius barbarus* around giving their distinctive calls. We also had good views of the Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica*.

Still a long way from the lake shore we came to the first thorn trees containing nests of Sacred Ibises *Threskiornis aethopica* with large young. At other times when there has been more rain the plains are very wet or flooded. The dry season probably accounted for the fact that there were no herons or egrets nesting now. Many nests were counted some three weeks earlier, but all had been deserted. Mr Britton, who has been studying the heronry regularly, thought the reason could be lack of food for the young, as a result of the abnormally dry conditions. Later we visited several clumps of trees with large numbers of Spoonbill *Platalea alba* nests with young of varying sizes, which we watched being fed. This looked most uncomfortable for the parent birds, as the young thrust their as yet small bills right into the throat of the parent bird, and at times one could see the shape of the youngster's bill through the skin of the parent's neck. Here again were many nests of Sacred Ibis and a large colony of Black-headed Weavers *Ploceus cucullatus*.

Later in the day the Nairobi members with Mr and Mrs Britton explored the area near the Muhoroni turn-off on the Kisumu road and many species unfamiliar to us were seen.

We are most grateful to Mr and Mrs Britton for planning this trip, which proved very difficult because of the lack of nesting birds at the normal nesting time and later, the large scale desertion by many species normally nesting there. However, it was a great pleasure to be shown around by experts on their own 'home' ground.

L.C.

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BIRDS NATURALISED IN EAST AFRICA

The term 'naturalised' is to be preferred to the alternative 'introduced' for species which are not native to a country but which have now established a breeding population there.

In East Africa we are very fortunate in that only a handful of exotic species of birds have become successfully naturalised, unlike some places, particularly islands, where there may be more exotic than indigenous species (i.e. Mauritius and Reunion 67%, Rodrigues 82% of land birds); Kenya and Tanzania have *c.* 0.5% of the total avifauna, and I can find no records of even a single species naturalised in Uganda. The most successful exotics in East Africa are on the coast in towns; this is a noticeable feature of mainland, versus island introductions. The main problem a newly arrived species has to deal with is finding a suitable and preferably unoccupied niche; on continents this is rather difficult as the fauna generally exploits all available niches. The one opening open to foreigners, which are often commensals of man, is a town or other man-made habitat.

Many introductions can be more or less accidental, as when cage birds escape. Deliberate attempts to introduce Jungle Fowl *Gallus* sp. and Pheasants *Phasianus colchicus* in the Cheranganis and at Kiambu were abortive, no doubt due to the bewildering array of predators with which these semi-domesticated birds could not cope. I understand that Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* are still to be found on some dams in western Kenya, but it is not known how 'wild' these are, so for the present they are best ignored as a really naturalised species.

The following lists all those species known to me to have become sucessfully naturalised:

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*. Occurs naturally in Uganda; on Zanzibar an Asiatic race has been introduced and is rare (Moreau & Pakenham 1941); in Kenya van Someren (1969) noted a pair at a nest in the Nairobi National Park. Whether these latter will become established remains to be seen; evidently they are escapes from aviaries, see also *antea* 1971: 173-174, 200, for other (non-breeding) sightings, presumably of the same individuals.

Lovebirds *Agapornis* spp. The Madagascar species *A. cana*, once introduced to Zanzibar and Mafia from the Comores (where it still occurs as a naturalised species) failed to establish itself permanently (Moreau & Pakenham 1941). The two other species of *Agapornis* are the only species in this list which are indeg'nous to East Africa, but which have had their ranges extended by man. It is interesting to note that they only appear to be successful in their new localities when associated with man. Both the yellow-collared *A. personata* and Fischer's *A. fischeri* became popular as cage birds in Europe in 1925, and Tanganyika Lovebirds were exported from Dar es Salaam and Tanga (see Moreau 1945 for details); successful colonies were formed, with *personata* predominating in Dar es Salaam and *fischeri* in Tanga, evidently because these are the predominant species along the respective railways. *A. fischeri* has never been recorded in the wild in Kenya, and *personata* only once as a straggler to Taveta (van Someren 1922); the numerous lovebirds in Kenya are, therefore, all escapees. They are particularly common in Nairobi and around Lake Naivasha (for other localities see van Someren 1969). As both species are involved and the various *Agapornis* species hybridise freely, most of these are intermediates of one stage or another - bird watchers at Naivasha can hardly expect to identify any particular individual, and could even claim two species from one bird.

Java Sparrow *Padda oryzivora*. An Asiatic species of waxbill despite the name, apparently established on Zanzibar, Pemba and coastal Tanzania. Moreau & Pakenham (1941) say it was introduced in the 1850's by the captain of a whaler from Salem, New England, U.S.A. implying a deliberate introduction; other populations are presumably escapes. It is a popular cage bird and specimens can be seen in Nairobi pet shops.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*. An Asian subspecies of this ubiquitous commensal of man, apparently successful in Zanzibar and at Dar es Salaam. Van Someren (1932) seems to be the only authority to have actually recorded this species at Mombasa - does it still occur? It seems extraordinary that it has not established itself in what seems a perfect sparrow locality. In Tanzania a further invasion of sparrows is imminent from Zambia (*antea* 1972: 14) of birds originally released at Durban, South Africa!

Indian House Crow *Corvus splendens*. Known from Zanzibar for some time; Moreau & Pakenham (1941) say that it was introduced there by British officials as a town scavenger. I am unable to discover exactly when it was introduced to Mombasa, but it has certainly been there for over twelve years. Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960: 723) seem to have been the first to record the bird in Kenya, and say it occurs on Mombasa island and up to 4 miles (*c.* 6km) to the north. Until recently I had not noted it further afield than about the same point, i.e. at Nyali, but early in 1972 I saw a pair at Mtwapa about 16km north of Mombasa, and others near Mazeras 20km west of the town. Mombasa residents could easily supply details of what they know of this colonisation and spread.

From the above it can be seen that East Africa is very fortunate in that none of its naturalised species is a pest (yet?), although conceivably the sparrow and crow could become so. Any further introductions must be deplored.

It is hoped that this short note will stimulate naturalists to record infromation on naturalised birds in the *Bulletin*, and also on any short-term unsuccessful introductions.

A.D. Forbes-Watson,
National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

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- - - - - - - - - - (1932) Birds of Kenya and Uganda. *Nov.Zool.* 37:252-380.

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NEST RECORD SCHEME

List of species for which there are no breeding records for one or more of the East African countries - Part II.

Charadrius forbesi	Forbes' Plover	U T
C. marginatus	White-fronted Sand Plover	U
Vanellus spinosus	Spur-winged Plover	T
Cursorius cinctus	Heuglin's Courser	U
Glareola nuchalis	White-collared Pratincole	K T
Pluvianus aegyptius	Egyptian Plover	U
Recurvirostra avosetta	Avocet	U
Gallinago nigripennis	African Snipe	U T
Columba albinucha	White-naped Pigeon	U
C. arquatrix	Olive Pigeon	U
C. delegorguei	Bronze-naped Pigeon	U T
C. guinea	Speckled Pigeon	U
Streptopelia decipiens	Mourning Dove	T
Treron waalia	Bruce's Green Pigeon	K
Turtur abyssinicus	Black-billed Blue-spotted Wood D.	U
Pterocles exustus	Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse	U
P. lichtensteinii	Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse	U
P. quadricinctus	Four-banded Sandgrouse	U
Agapornis cana	Grey-headed Lovebird	T
A. fischeri	Fischer's Lovebird	K
A. pullaria	Red-headed Lovebird	K
A. swinderniana	Black-collared Lovebird	U
Poicephalus cryptoxanthus	Brown-headed Parrot	K
P. gulielmi	Red-headed Parrot	T
P. robustus	Brown-necked Parrot	T
P. rufiventris	Orange-bellied Parrot	K
Psittacula krameri	Rose-ringed Parakeet	K U
Centropus cupreicaudus	Songwe Coucal	T

Centropus senegalensis	Senegal Coucal	K U
C. toulou	Black Coucal	U
Cercococcyx mechowi	Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo	U
C. montanus	Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo	K U
C. olivinus	Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo	U
Ceuthmochares aereus	Yellow-bill	K T
Clamator levaillantii	Levaillant's Cuckoo	K
Corythaixoides personata	Bare-faced Go-away Bird	K
Tauraco fischeri	Fischer's Turaco	K
T. hartlaubi	Hartlaub's Turaco	U
T. leucolophus	White-crested Turaco	K
T. schuetii	Black-billed Turaco	K

K, U, T after a species indicates that there are no records for Kenya, Uganda or Tanzania respectively. If members can help by supplying breeding data (however scant) on any of the above species I would be pleased to hear from them. I would also be grateful for information on published literature giving records for any of these species.

Hazel Britton,
E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record Scheme,
Box 1102,
KISUMU, Kenya.

LAKE BARINGO LODGE

The Society arranged two very successful trips to the Lake Baringo Lodge during June. On the second weekend, 24th-25th June, 94 species of birds were recorded from the area but with nothing very unusual. The Violet-backed Sunbird *Anthreptes orientalis* was common in the Lodge grounds, as were the Red Bishop *Euplectes orix* on the lake shore. A pair of Jackson's Hornbills *Tockus jacksoni* had a nest in the bole of an acacia tree in the car park. At the cliff face behind the Lodge the Bristle-crowned Starlings *Onycognathus salvadorii* put on a good show for us. We also saw a young Verreaux' Eagle *Aquila verreauxii*; the nest was not found on the second trip, but members managed to locate it on the first trip. Unfortunately Magpie Starlings *Speculipastor bicolor* were not in evidence, and only one was seen on the way home.

During the afternoon of 24th June the rain clouds started to build up and there was 26mm of rain during the night, this must have done the country some good as there was no ground cover due to overgrazing by goats. The Museum Entomologist, Mike Clifton was on the trip and was very pleased about the rain as it brought out many insects. He was able to collect about 150 species from this little known area. The Red Velvet Mites came out after the rain and looked like small drops of blood on the ground. The Phalanx Ants, *Platythyrea cribinodis* were commonly seen in hunting parties and seemed to be feeding mainly on termites.

Several members visited the Snake Park run by Johnathan Leakey and had an interesting time watching the snakes. One member ended up by buying some Pythons for his farm at Naivasha which were called 'export rejects'. As we had no botanist on the trip the flora had to go unidentified. We did try to determine some of the trees, but had little success.

The journey home was muddy in places, but all members made it through to Nakuru with only minor 'bog-downs'. Our thanks go to Mrs J.Houry for arranging the trip from Nairobi, and to Mr and Mrs Mike Skinner for looking after us so well while we were there.

D.A.

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

I believe that the "Wild flowers in the Nairobi National Park" is now out of print and though I should of course very much like to see it reprinted, circumstances have arisen whereby a book covering a much wider area, if not the whole of Kenya, may be produced by a well known London publisher. In addition to many more drawingsof plants by my husband, I have the loan of a large number of excellent colour slides with which the book (if published) will be illustrated. There are, however, gaps which I would very much like filled by further slides. I wonder whether any members of the Society have any slides covering plants mentioned in the following list or whether, where they are easily accessible such as in the Game Park or on the Ngong Hills, anyone would be willing to take the required photograph.

Initially, will anyone who has a slide or slides of the plants mentioned please let me know direct:

PLANT	SITE LIKELY TO BE FOUND
Gynandra gynandropsis Capparidaceae	Hippo Pool, Nairobi National Park
Aeschynomene schimperi Papilionaceae	" " " " "
Polygonum senegalense Polygonaceae	Hyaena Dam " " "
Leonotis nepetifolia Labiatae	Grassland at Langata end N.N.P.
Ferula communis Umbelliferae	Ngong Hills, tall yellow flowers.
Asparagus racemosus Liliaceae	Ngong Hills, long feathery sprays of small yellow flowers on bushy plant.
Cycniopsis obtusifolia Scrophulariaceae	Ngong, small pink flowers on road-side banks.
Vernonia brachycalyx Compositae	Ngong, tall, mauve many flowerd daisy.
Coleus caninus Labiatae	Ngong Hills, in clumps near escarpment.
Silene burchellii Caryophyllaceae	" " slender, pink flowered.
Vaupelia hispida Boraginaceae	Magadi road within 15km of Ngong Hills hairy plants, mauve/blue flowers.
Agaurua salicifolia Ericaceae	Fairly common shrub near Eburru hot springs, typical 'bell-like' flowers in short racemes.
Chascanum hildebrandtii Verbenaceae	White-flowered herbaceous plant common in Kibwezi thicket near 'Bushwackers'.
Sesamum angustifolium Pedaliaceae	In clumps on sandbank near 'Bushwackers' deep pinky/mauve flowers.

Abutilon longicuspe Malvaceae	Tall graceful shrub, numerous pale mauve flowers. On Mua Hills or Donyo Sabuk.

HIGHLAND PLANTS

Clematis hirsuta Ranunculaceae	Numerous small cream-coloured flowers, climbs or trails.
Dissotis macrocarpa Melastomataceae	Shrub found in damp areas, large magenta flowers.
Pycnostachys deflexifolia Labiatae or similar species	Tall herb, terminal cones of small blue flowers.
Satyrium crassicaule Orchidaceae	Terrestrial orchid, many pink flowers, swamp loving.
Ottelia ulvaefolia Hydrocharitaceae	Yellow flowered water plant.
Aristea alata Iridaceae	Small iris with one or two blue flowers on thin leaflike stem.

S. Heriz-Smith,
63 Coniston Avenue,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent, England.

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WEEK-END AT BUSHWACKERS SAFARI CAMP

Bushwackers is well known as a lovely place for naturalists of all persuasions, and it lived up to its reputation last month when a party of our members went there on 8th-9th July. The area has had much less than even its meagre average of rain this year and the country was very dry and covered with grey leafless bush. Perhaps for this reason there seemed to be fewer birds than usual around; but there was the usual crowd at the bird table and plenty to interest those who had not been there before, and indeed those who had as well. In the river bed a pair of Three-banded Plovers *Charadrius tricollaris* had a well-grown chick. Further down stream a White-fronted Sand-Plover *Charadrius marginatus* was found (in my notes I have down that I saw one in the same place within a few days of the same date four years ago).

The vegetation, dry as it was, was very interesting. Perhaps it is easier for beginners when dry, as in the wet season the wealth of flowers is bewildering. The river bed was of course the best place to look. A *Vernonia* (*brachycalix* probably) was in flower and attracting many insects. *Sesbania bispinosa* and *Albizzia anthelmintica* were also in flower. Along the river we also noticed the beautiful Tana River Poplar *Populus ilicifolia* and *Acacia elatior* with its big swollen thorns. In camp we were able to recognise *Terminalia brownii* with its red-winged seeds and *Commiphora africana* with right-angled branches and small berries. *Cassia abreviata* was not in flower but recognisable by its long pods, and *Sterculia rhychocarpa* by its peculiar shape and its hard hairy fruit whose seeds the squirrels seemed to like, as many had been gnawed. These trees are common throughout that type of bush country and in many cases we were helped in our identifications by learning the Kamba names from the Stanton's old tracker, Buba.

Bushwackers is like a little piece of the Tsavo National Park, a piece in which you can walk about and enjoy the plants, birds and insects at your leisure; and though you may not see any mammals except Dikdik, their tracks can be seen any morning in the river sand with or without Buba's help......

P.M.A.

SCENT AND FEMALE MAMMALS

Miss Rickman, a member of the Society, at present in hospital, has asked me to write and enquire if other members have heard of the theory that mammals who have just given birth or are just about to give birth to young have no scent and so are protected from at least some of their predators. Miss Rickman herself has had two experiences which might lend support to such a theory.

The first was in her early days when she lived in the country in England and used to hunt. On this occasion she had reason to think that there was a vixen with small cubs in a certain place. She asked the Huntsman what would happen when they drew that covert, and he replied that the hounds would not be able to find the vixen as she would have no scent. Miss Rickman thought that he was saying this just to comfort her, but actually the hounds did not find the vixen.

Later, after she came out to Kenya, she was walking one day on Kinangop with two dogs which were keen hunters, when a female Bushbuck leapt up very near them and bounded away. The dogs paid no attention, and Miss Rickman wondered if it had just given birth to a young one and therefore had no scent.

P.M. Allen,
Box 44486,
Nairobi.

MR JOHN REYNOLDS ON "INTIMATE GLIMPSES OF AFRICAN BIRD LIFE"

Mr Reynolds' illustrated lecture on 10th July in the Museum Hall was a rare treat for members interested in birds and bird photography. His slides were all superb and just could not be criticised. The majority were taken at, or near the nest; others were taken of birds away from the nest either from a hide or from a Land Rover - a mobile hide.

The slides were accompanied by an interesting commentary; in particular Mr Reynolds' observations on temperature regulation in ground-nesting birds and his remarks on the natural hazards which beset bush-nesting birds in Africa. Regarding the latter topic, he showed slides of a nest containing young being overrun by safari ants *Dorylus* sp. and he mentioned that he had seen this happen on a number of occasions and had suspected it on even more. His slides of all five East African species of Courser *Cursorius* spp. were especially interesting and relevant to the subject of temperature control; a recent paper, of which Mr Reynolds was co-author and illustrator, was the outcome of his own interest in this group.* The last group of slides was of bee-eaters *Merops* spp., including some showing *M. albicollis* 'helpers' at the nest (*antea* 1972:116-120).

A few people mentioned that Mr Reynolds hurried past certain slides and that they would have liked to have seen them for longer; maybe so, but at the end of the lecture I am sure that nobody was yawning or asleep and this, after all must be the ultimate test of any lecture. In fact the birds which were shown only briefly were all of very well known species.

Now that Mr Reynolds is living in Nairobi, I hope that we can persuade him to show us more of his pictures in the future.

*Cramp, Stanley, Reynolds, J.F. & Harris, David. Studies of less familiar birds 168 Cream Coloured Courser. *Br. Birds* 65 (3):120-124. 1972.
(A copy of this paper has been presented to the Library). Ed.

G.C.B.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

5th/6th August, 1972 : Visit to Ngobit Estate, camp.

14th August, 1972 : Mr J.B. Gillett of the E.A. Herbarium will give an illustrated lecture on "Plant Identification" in the Museum Hall at 5.15 p.m.

11th September, 1972 at 5.15 p.m. : Professor P.A. Robins of the University of Nairobi will give an illustrated lecture on "Cave Paintings in Southern and Eastern Africa and Europe."

16th/17th September, 1972. : Week-end camp near Naro Moru. Camping will be at Minto Safaris camp in the forest, where fire-wood and water will be provided, otherwise members must be self-contained. There will be a camping fee of sh.5/- per person. This locality should offer a good opportunity to study the forest, its wild life and birds. Fishing in the vicinity is possible, if members possess a valid fishing licence. Landrover or similar vehicles will be necessary if people wish to explore the higher altitudes. Members should make their own way to the camp site, which will be signposted from Naro Moru, any time during the week-end from Friday onwards. Distance from Naro Moru 8km, altitude about 2300m. If you intend to come, please fill in the enclosed slip and return it to Mrs Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi, before September 10th in order that Minto Safaris may be notified of the numbers attending. Please do not bring dogs.

9th October, 1972 at 5.15 p.m. : Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson will give an illustrated talk on "Bird Life on the Indian Ocean Islands".

(27th) 28th/29th October, 1972. : Camp at Elmenteita. Details later.

12th November, 1972. : Excursion : Small Mammal identification.

13th November, 1972. : Lecture, Dr G.M.O. Maloiy on " Animal Physiology in drier areas".

4th December, 1972. : Lecture by Dr J.B. Sale on "Hyrax and Elephants".

PLEASE NOTE : There will be no Wedensday morning bird walks during August as Mrs N'gweno will be away.

NEW MEMBERS - AUGUST

Full Members:

Mrs Josephine Brock, Medical Physiology Dept. Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mrs A. Cole, Box 127, Gilgil, Kenya.
Miss E. Davie, Box 30039, Nairobi.
Mrs A. Duff, Box 30465, Nairobi.
Mrs Kathrin Goodwin, Kenton College, Box 30017, Nairobi.
Mr S.P. Jackson, Banda Prep. School, Box 24722, Nairobi.
Mr P.D. Kelly, Box 40580, Nairobi.
Mr G.S. Lassus, Box 30518, Nairobi.
Mrs P. Lawrence, c/o B.O.A.C., Box 19073, Nairobi.
Mr Michael Lee, c/o Town Planning Section, Box 30075, Nairobi.
Dr R.S.M. Mol, c/o W.H.O., Box 45335, Nairobi.
Mrs Anne Nelson, Box 30028, Nairobi.
Mrs M.C. Nickson, Box 45005, Nairobi.
Mr T.P. Rainey, Box 30009, Nairobi.
Mr Bernard Robel, Box 14589, Nairobi.
Miss Gail Schroeder, c/o Dept. of Economics, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr Christopher Starr, 47 Patterson Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
Mr Donald Vincent, Box 41746, Nairobi.

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

As part of a paper on the status, especially breeding, of East African Laridae, we would very much appreciate dated records of the Skimmer *Rhynchops flavirostris* from anywhere in East Africa. Skimmers nesting in the southern tropics are evidently migratory, moving north in the rains, but where to exactly, is not known. Likewise the Lake Rudolf breeding population is not resident on Central Island, and probably accounts for the occasional birds at Lakes Nakuru and Naivasha. The breeding area of western Uganda birds is unknown. Thus, even records from the well-watched western Uganda National Parks are valuable. Please send locality, date and number of individuals to P. Britton (address below) If a favoured locality like Central Island or Murchison Falls was visited and you saw *no* Skimmers, please let us know. Thank you.

Peter Britton, Box 1102, Kisumu and Leslie Brown, Box 24916, Karen.

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FOR SALE

Mackworth-Praed & Grant, Birds of Eastern & North Eastern Africa, 2 vols., ist Ed., Best offer over £35 secures; P. Ayerst, Box 30253 Nairobi, tel. 66240.

Roneo 250 hand duplicator (portable) in good condition. Can be seen in the Nat. Museum Library. £20 or near offer.

WANTED

Old East African coins (including E.A. Currency Board) and notes; also trade tokens and old covers. J.J. Ruparel, Box 10993, Nairobi.

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LIBRARY NOTICE: during Pius Mulwa's holiday the Library will be shut on Monday mornings from 21st August to 18th September inclusive.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
FEB - 1 1973
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Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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COMMUNAL DISPLAY BY PRATINCOLES *GLAREOLA PRATINCOLA*

A communal display by Pratincoles *Glareola pratincola* was observed on one of the territorial breeding grounds (TG) of Uganda Kob *Adenota kob* in the Queen Elizabeth National Park. A TG is usually very heavily grazed and is therefore preferred by Pratincoles and Senegal Plovers *Vanellus lugubrius* both for nesting and roosting. On visiting one of these TGs in the Park on 29th May, 1972 I found about 40 Pratincoles on it. My attention was captured by two very small chicks of this species. As I was watching them, I noticed two birds sitting on the ground in a slight depression. Thinking that they might be sitting on eggs, I alighted from the Land Rover and started walking towards them. The whole flock of birds thereupon took off from the ground emitting loud twittering noises.

All the birds kept flying over me but occasionally one or two landed on the ground hardly more than 3 - 5m from me and displayed a curious behaviour. On landing, the birds crouched flat on the ground, opened their wings fully and flapped them up and down. This display was so interesting that while engrossed in watching it I lost sight of the tiny chicks I had seen before. I am of the opinion that these birds, taking me to be a potential danger to the chicks and also to the eggs which might be there, performed this curious behaviour to entice the predator (that is, me) from the newly hatched offspring and possibly eggs too. The interesting part of this episode is that the whole community of 40 or so birds joined in these efforts.

On visiting another TG an hour or so later, a group of 15 - 20 Pratincoles were seen. All the birds took off when I disturbed them by walking towards the group. It was noticeable that this group kept flying over me at a greater height and there was an absence of the display described above and of the sharp twittering noise. Lack of the display probably indicats that there were no eggs or chicks nearby.

Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952) do not give a breeding record of this bird for Uganda, although they mention that it is known to breed in Kenya (in July), in Malawi (September and October), Zambia (September and October) and Natal (November). In Queen Elizabeth Park this species has been repeatedly seen breeding during the period of May to September.

K.L. Modha,
Queen Elizabeth National Park,
P.O. Queen Elizabeth Park,
Uganda.

NOTICE

Dr Gavrilov of Alma Ata, U.S.S.R. writes to say that he and his team are dyeing Swallows *Hirundo rustica* again this autumn, using what he hopes will be more durable dyes. Would anyone seeing a coloured swallow please let me know: colour, number of birds, date and place. Thank you.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

A HONEY BUZZARD *PERNIS APIVORUS* AT KIAMBU

On 22nd July, Mrs Mitton of Kiambu very kindly contacted the writer concerning a "brown hawk" which she could not identify. This bird was feeding on honey-comb taken from an exposed bee nest or hive in her garden. The bird had raided the nest *Apis mellifera* which was suspended below a branch of a croton tree some 12m up and hidden amongst parasitic mistletoe *Viscum* sp. Raids had been made in the early morning with the bird tearing away pieces of comb to feed on the grubs and emerging bees.

I visited the garden in the afternoon, but there was not a sign of the bird though a Honeyguide *Indicator minor* was present feeding on the comb. The bees had become vicious and stung several people. The hive was roughly spherical or oval and about 40cm in diameter.

On the 23rd Mrs Mitton reported that the bird had again raided the bees in the early morning and taken more comb. On the 24th I visited the garden again to find the bird sitting in a fig tree by the house. It had raided the hive earlier in the morning and taken a piece of comb to the tree. Most confiding, it allowed very close approach. It was identified as a Honey Buzzard; slim black beak, sleek snakey head and was in somewhat mixed plumage, with new feathers here and there. The bird flew to a tall gum tree and after sitting, preening for about half an hour, we watched it raid the hive. With a swoop it left the gum, swung low and then suddenly swept upwards to the branch where it landed with much wing flapping above the comb which it struck at with beak and claws. It did not succeed in dislodging a piece of comb but only in disturbing the bees. It retreated to the gum tree and we to the house. It was a dull morning and to our relief the bees were not very active.

To confirm the record, Alec Forbes-Watson of the National Museum came with me to Kiambu on the 25th and we spent over an hour with fine views, at close range, of the bird which had already raided the hive and was sitting low in a jacaranda tree digesting a meal of bees and grubs; crop very full. The identification was confirmed and a series of black and white and colour pictures were taken. Some of the black and white photos have been lodged in the National Museum.

Later the Buzzard came to the ground to try and recover a piece of comb on which earlier we had watched the Honeyguide feeding. It contained grubs and emerging bees. Alas, dogs chased the bird off, however, this gave us another chance to see the wing shape and pale underwing pattern.

Pictures in various books are not always very satisfactory as a guide to field identification as there are so many colour phases of the adult; furthermore the juvenile to sub-adult plumage can be so different. Specimens in the Museum are very variable with no two really alike and vary from a grey-headed very dark bird to others with well marked bars across the chest and belly to others with more spots than bars. There is an excellent drawing by Lilian Medland in Charles Stonham's 'Birds of the British Islands', part IX, March 1908 which is very like our Kiambu bird which I describe as follows:-

Medium sized, *c.*40cm; beak black and slim, well hooked at tip, cere at base dull yellow. Eye yellow, head small, snakey, fawn-tawny and back of head with dark flecks also nape to shoulders and back. Lores dark, scaley. Chin, throat tawny with dark flecks to small spots. Upper breast with some dark spots and flecks and lower breast with broad dark brownish-black bars. Flanks with less bold bars, lighter than those of breast. Thighs lightly barred brownish on tawny. Undertail tawny with light brown bars. Tail longish, brown reaching beyond wing tips, (one new dark feather) with narrow pale tip and light bars (best seen in flight). Back, shoulders dark greyish-brown. Coverts, secondaries some with pale tips. Primaries, above almost black, faint light bars. Wings fairly long but broad, not rounded, underside pale with dark markings. Legs and feet dull orange-yellow, claws black not very hooked. It appeared rather a sluggish bird and though sitting out in the open was not molested or chivvied by other small birds which were plentiful.

Acknowledgement. Many thanks to Mrs Mitton for calling attention to this very interesting and uncommon bird.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

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RINGING NEWS

In June (*antea* 1972:113) I asked for suggestions for improving the ringing schedules but, so far I have had only one reply. Unless I hear from ringers during the next month I will assume that all of you are happy with the present schedules.

The 1970/71 ringing report is with the printers and should be published within the next few months. The 1971/72 report should be submitted to the Hon. Editor early in 1973, although almost all ringers have sent in their schedules for last year the report cannot be completed until the years' recoveries have been notified; the Moscow ringing office (the source of most East African recoveries) usually writes towards the end of the year.

Four interesting recoveries are given below, these will be given in full in the 1972/3 report which should be published in 1974.

1. *Anas erythrorhynchos* Red-billed Duck, Ngorongoro, Tanzania to Karatu, Tanzania; nearly 8 years elapsed (the late J. Goddard).
2. *Anas hottentota* Hottentot Teal, Naivasha to Mwea, Kenya; 2½ years elapsed (G.C.B.).
3. *Hirundo rustica* Swallow, Nakuru to Halabja, Iraq; nearly 6 months elapsed (M.StJ.Sugg).
4. *Hirundo rustica* Swallow, Iringa, Tanzania to Nuremburg, Germany; 1 year 5 months elapsed (J.F.Reynolds).

Swallow number 4 is particularly interesting as it is the furthest west of our recoveries to date (Nuremburg is 11 degrees East). John Reynolds has also had an Iringa-ringed swallow recovered in the Samarkand Region of the U.S.S.R. at over 66 degrees East. The results of his swallow ringing combined with those from other parts of East Africa, already show that the swallows found here in winter come from a very wide area of the Palearctic.

Very few swallows were ringed in East Africa last year (1971/72) so that there will surely be a drop in the number of recoveries of this species. The swallow is a remarkably "good" bird to ring for recoveries, as I mentioned in the last ringing report (*Jl E. Afr. nat. Hist. Soc.* 28(123)). Unfortunately, the most active ringers of Palearctic birds still in East Africa rarely come upon worthwhile concentrations of Swallows. Clearly if swallows could be ringed in vast numbers so that large numbers of recoveries would result, these recoveries could be analysed in a meaningful way so that subsequently, less ringing effort would need to be expended on this species. So could I appeal once again to members to let me know of concentrations (preferably roosts) of European hirundines, i.e. Swallow, Sand Martin and House Martin; any information will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

Graeme Backhurst,
Ringing Organizer,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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SOME WHITE - THROATED BEE - EATERS ARE RESIDENT IN KENYA

Further to Mr Reynolds' interesting notes (*antea* 1972:116-120) and in answer to C.R.S. Pitman (*antea* 1972:49) I can now say that some *Merops albicollis* are RESIDENT along the Magadi road in the general area Ololkisaili - Olekemonge to Lake Magadi. I have records for every month from January 1970 to June 1972. Six pairs have been known to breed. One pair plus young are to be found at the gap in the cliffs where the Magadi Hot Springs road enters the lake flats and another pair is in residence near to the Hot Springs, probably the same area in which Reynolds found breeding. There are three pairs between km 55 and km 70 from Nairobi and the pair at km 89 (the site of the pair whose nest I excavated). All bred in 1971. There is another pair near Ololkisaili and one, just off the main road, at km 48. No breeding was recorded this season except at Magadi for rains have been very patchy and few dragonflies were about or even grasshoppers as food for the young.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

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DEMISE OF A FRUIT BAT

During June and July 1972 the *Maesopsis eminii* trees (locally known as *mutere*) here at Maseno were loaded with fruit. Attendant upon this harvest were many fruit bats, Black and White Casqued Hornbills *Bycanistes subcylindricus*, Green Pigeons *Treron australis* and insectivorous birds attracted by the fruit loving insects.

One medium sized fruit bat, perhaps with a fruit to eat, 'perched' on the overhead three-phase power wires (vertically arranged) and presumably electrocuted itself at 415 volts between wires of two phases, as it remained hanging by one foot for several days.

It would be interesting to know how many bats or birds are killed in this way. There is a record of a Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* (if I remember correctly) in the U.K. which landed awkwardly in wet weather, put its feet on two wires and died. Normally countless birds perch safely on one wire as electrocution occurs only if a short is caused between two wires.

J.F. Harper,
Maseno Secondary School,
Box 120, Maseno.

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SCENT AND FEMALE MAMMALS

I was very interested in the article by P.M. Allen, on the above subject (*antea* 1972:150) as it may be the explanation of a curious and, to me, amusing incident which occurred when I was walking with my dog a few months ago.

We were going through bush and scrub country, bordered by Acacia woodland, near Lake Naivasha, when a female duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia* sprang out of a thicket and bounded away from us. The dog made no attempt to chase her but stood stock-still, intently gazing at something in the long grass.

I went closer and found a very young duiker standing motionless (on 'Mum's'instructions no doubt!) only a few feet from my dog. They stood there, looking at each other for a full minute, neither moving. Then the dog turned away and took no further notice of or interest in either mother or child.

E.D. Polhill,
Box 91, Naivasha.

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MR J. B. GILLETT ON PLANT IDENTIFICATION

At the start of his lecture on plant identification, Mr Gillett told us that he considered elementary Botany a dull subject, and I am afraid some of us have found it so in the past - never again, however. To one beginner at least it was like being taken by an expert guide into a territory where one was always afraid of getting lost. The world of plants is so enormous and so strange; plants are so much older than we are and have developed along such different lines that the mere outsider is apt to retire awe-struck and despairing. But here too similarities produce order under the systematist's careful hand. Plants, like animals, can be seen to fall into a few big groups. There are the Ferns (Vascular Cryptograms) which are presumed to be the most primitive, the Gymnosperms (well represented in E.A. by Cycads, Juniper and Podocarpus), and finally the Angiosperms, presumably the least primitive, since their ovules are protected in a case, unlike those of Gymnosperms, whose name means 'naked seeds'. Probably in the course of evolution this protection of the seeds has proved of survival value. The Angiosperms themselves fall into two groups, Archichlamydae in which the petals are separate, and Gamopetalae in which they are joined to form a tube or trumpet. Again it is supposed that the latter are the more advanced, since this tubular arrangement offers more protection to the inner parts. But it is the Monocotyledons that seem to be the aristocrats of the plant world - some people would say of the garden world as well.

After explaining briefly about scientific classification and the necessity for a universally accepted nomenclature, Mr Gillett went on to show us a splendid selection of colour slides from a collection left by the late Mr R.A.F. Brenan, an eminent member of our Society and brother of the Keeper of the Herbarium at Kew. Besides these slides Mr Gillett displayed pictures from the Herbarium files illustrating many of the families of plants and the important points to look for in sorting them out.

The Herbarium staff will always help the genuine enquirer; but members should realise that the experts are not there to save us trouble! Not until we have taken all possible trouble for ourselves have we a right to bother the expert, in whatever field he works. All available books must be consulted proper notes made and specimens properly prepared. There is an excellent account of how to do this in the introduction to Lind & Tallantire's "Some common Flowering Plants of Uganda", which was specially recommended by Mr Gillett as a good beginner's book. Other books he recommended are G.W. Ivens' "East African weeds and their control" which contains excellent line drawings of common plants, and of course Dale & Greenway's "Kenya Trees & Shrubs". All these books are by members of the Society and can be seen in the Library, but keen people will buy their own copies, especially as this is the sort of book that all too quickly goes out of print. We are pleased to hear that a book on the Upland plants of Kenya is now being prepared by Dr A.D.Q. Agnew, the last President of our Society.

P.M.A.

REQUEST: "FLORA OF UPLAND KENYA"

Members may be interested to know about the project to publish this work, designed to cover the Flora of Kenya above 3000 feet.

Dr Agnew prepared the material for the book on a Ford Foundation Grant, but this did not extend to the publication. This is planned through the Oxford University Press but, in view of the volume of material to be included and the relatively small sale potential for the book, a subsidy of £2,500 is required before publication can take place.

The book will be illustrated with line drawings and will fulfil a long outstanding need for use in schools and the University. It will also be most useful aid to the amateur botanist and naturalist.

Through the generosity of a large number of firms, Societies and individuals, over three-quarters of the sum required has been raised. Any assistance from members to help reach the target would be appreciated.

L.A.S. Grumbley,
Box 42011, Nairobi.

CAMP AT NGOBIT

A very big THANK YOU to the Carnegie family for inviting fellow members to camp at Ngobit Estate.

FOR providing transport for an unforgettable trip into the Abedares up to 3200m on a little known track.

FOR lavishly entertaining members to supper and for spending the whole weekend showing members various interesting parts of the farm.

We are most grateful to our hosts for the time and trouble spent in making it such an enjoyable weekend.

L.C.

SOUND RECORDINGS OF BIRDS

Robert Stjernstedt has made an extensive series of recordings of birds from East Africa and Zambia between 1965 and now. All the recordings were made on "Uher" machines at 19cm/s. Mr Stjernstedt has produced a list of species recorded and is offering to make copies for anyone interested. Please contact him direct at - RW 60, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA.

Ed.

FOR SALE

One set 3 Vols. Jackson, Birds of Kenya Colony and the Uganda Protectorate. Sh.2000/- Available for inspection at the National Museum Library by arrangement with the Hon. Librarian or the Hon. Secretary, E.A.N.H.S.

Miss Anne Joyce, Kilima Kiu, P.O. Konza, Kenya.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday 11th September, 1972 at 5.15 p.m.: Professor P.A. Robins will give an illustrated lecture on "Cave paintings in Southern and Eastern Africa and Europe", in the National Museum Hall.

Thursday 14th September, 1972 at 7.30p.m.: David Jones will give an illustrated talk on "Climbing on Mount Kilimanjaro", in the British Council lecture room Kisumu.

16th/17th September, 1972: Week-end camp near Naro Moru; for details please see August issue, page 151.

Saturday 30th September, 1972 at 2.30 p.m.: Nature walk in the Langata Forest led by Mr & Mrs Lucas Booth. Please meet at the Main Gate of Nairobi National Park at 2.30 p.m. and bring picnic tea.

Thursday 5th October, 1972 at 7.30 p.m.: Mike Hill will talk on "Insect behaviour and its application to various trapping techniques", in the British Council lecture room Kisumu.

Monday 9th October, 1972 at 5.15 p.m.: Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson will give an illustrated talk on "Bird life on the Indian Ocean islands", in the National Museum Hall.

(27th), 28th/29th October, 1972: Camp at Elmenteita. Details next month.

Thursday 2nd November, 1972 at 7.30 p.m.: John Harper will talk on "Natural History of the Rift Valley (Kenya)", in the British Council lecture room, Ksm.

Saturday 12th November, 1972: Excursion: Small Mammal Identification leader Mr A. Duff-McKay.

Monday 13th November, 1972: Lecture, Dr G.M.O. Maloiy on "Animal physiology in drier areas". In Nairobi.

Monday 4th December, 1972: Lecture, Dr J.B. Sale on "Hyrax and Elephants". In Nairobi.

Monday 8th January, 1973: Lecture, Mr G.A. Classen on "Hunting Aloes in East Africa". In Nairobi.

If any members have suggestions or offers for lectures and/or outings, Mrs Lise Campbell, the Functions Organizer of the Society, would be pleased to hear from them at Box 14469 Nairobi.

Please contact Mr John Harper for any further information on the meetings to be held in Kisumu; his address is: Maseno Secondary School, Box 120 MASENO.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Mr John Karmali has asked me to mention that he has heard from only 16 of the 575 local members - a staggering 2.8% return - in response to his request on page 136 of the August issue. Please write in, a postcard will do.

Ed.

NEW MEMBERS - SEPTEMBER 1972

Life Member:

Dr C.H. Fry, University of Aberdeen, Dept. of Zoology,
Aberdeen AB9 2TN, Scotland.

Full members:

Mrs Alex Anderson, Box 45536, Nairobi.
Dr D.M. Blankhart, Medical Research Council, Box 49370, Nairobi.
Miss M.K. Baker, Lirhanda Girls' Secondary School, Box 87, Kakamega.
Mr Duncan Cape, Box 23, Nandi Hills, Kenya.
Miss Jean Cooper, Box 43005, Nairobi.
Mrs S. Flint, Quycyclerks, Orphir, Orkney, U.K.
Mr D.W. Furnas, Box 30125, Nairobi.
Mr H.G.H. Hamilton, Box 30333, Nairobi.
Mrs E.E. Harvey, Box 40509, Nairobi.
Mr A.V. Kingston, M.R.C.V.S., Box 43844, Nairobi.
Mr Ebbe la Cour, Box 14140, Nairobi.
Mr G.S. Lassus, Box 30518, Nairobi.
Mr P. Markham, c/o Kenya Orchards Ltd., P.O. Machakos, Kenya.
Mr M.J. Rughani, Box 47540, Nairobi.
Miss S. Sassoon, 21 Upper Phillimore Gardens, London W.8.
Mr Theta Tsu, Box 46831, Nairobi.
Miss S.M. Waston, Box 30519, Nairobi.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

ASH, J.S. 1972. Distribution map scheme for Ethiopia. *Ibis* 114:109.

BROWN, L.H. 1972. Natural longevity in wild Crowned Eagles *Stephanoaetus coronatus*. *Ibis* 114:263.

BYERS, G.W. 1971. An illustrated annotated catalogue of African Mecoptera. *Univ.Kansas Sci.Bull.* 49:389.

CAPROTTI, E. 1971. Le Lobelie giganti del Monte Kenia e del Kilimangiaro. *Natura, Milan.* 62:187.

CURRY-LINDAHL, K. 1972. War and the White Rhinos. *Oryx* 11:263m.

DONNELLY, B.G. & IRWIN, M.P.S. 1972. Clinal size variation in the Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*. *Bull.Br.Orn.Club.* 92.

DOWLING, H.G. 1964. Color change: Chameleon camouflage. *Natural History* 73:40

FRY, C.H. 1972. The social organisation of Bee-eaters (Meropidae) and co-operative breeding in hot-climate birds. *Ibis* 114:1.

HEPPER, F.N. (Ed) Tropical African plants: XXXI. 1972. *Kew Bull.* 26:563.

HOOIJER, D.A. 1971. A new Rhinoceros from the late Mioncene of Loperot, Turkana district, Kenya. *Bull.Mus.Comp.Zool.* 142, No.3.

JARMAN, P.J. 1972. The development of the dermal shield in Impala. *J.Zool.* 166:349.

KAHL, M.P. 1972. Comparative ethology of the Ciconiidae. The wood-storks (Genera *Mycteria* and *Ibis*). *Ibis* 114:15.

" " " 1971. Observations on the breeding of Abdim's Stork at Lake Shala, Ethiopia. *Ostrich* 42:233.

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Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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BIRDS ON THE LAVA FIELDS OF TELEKI'S VOLCANO

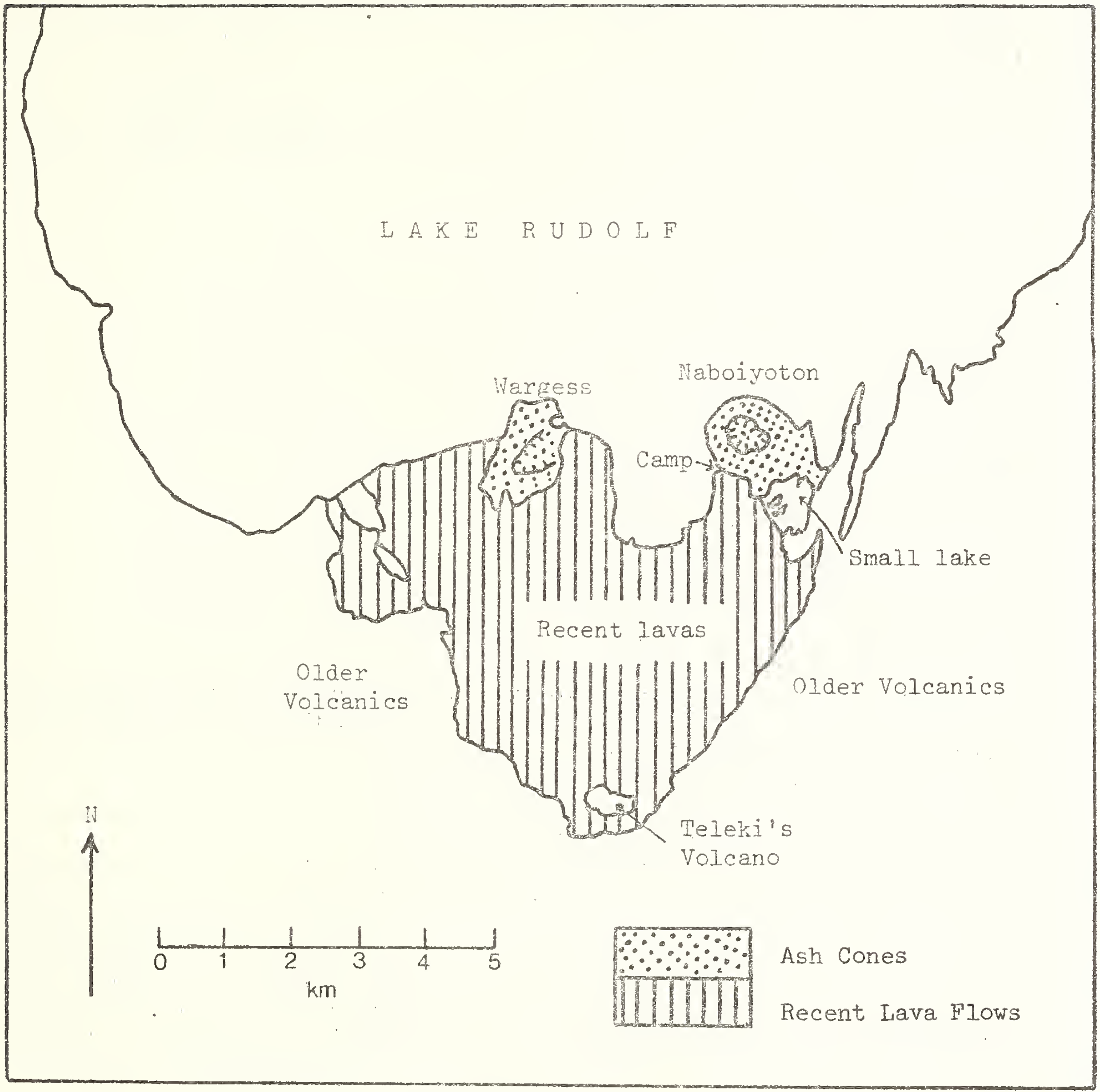
In June 1972 a visit was made by four members of staff from the Department of Physics, University of Nairobi, to the lava fields of Teleki's volcano at the south end of Lake Rudolf. The main object of the expedition was to drill oriented cores from lava flows of different ages, for palaeomagnetic investigations. The purpose of this note is to record some incidental observations of the local bird life from a region which is rarely visited.

The accompanying sketch map shows the area visited and the position of the camp site where we spent four days. The shaded area represents the lava field of Teleki's volcano. This field is crossed by at least five flows of various ages ranging from about 80 years old to several hundreds of years. Most of these flows reach the shore of Lake Rudolf in the bay between the much older (pleistocene) ash cones of Wargess and Naboiyoton. The shoreline consists of steep bouldery lava cliffs up to 10m high, with occasional stony beaches on which bask numerous crocodiles. On the south-east side of Naboiyoton is a small and apparently unnamed lake with dimensions in the E-W and N-S directions of nearly one kilometre. This lake is not marked on the 1:1000,000 or 1:250,000 topographical maps of the area, but is shown on Dodson's geological map of the South Horr district. The south side of this lake is also bounded by lava cliffs and there are small islands formed by projectiong ridges of lava. The northern and eastern shores are of gently sloping fine ash.

The surface of the lava field varies from broken slabby lava blocks to clinkery slag and, with the exception of the oldest flow on which a scanty plant life is beginning to appear, it is completely devoid of vegetation. It is extremely difficult to negotiate and bird watching was confined to the shoreline of the bay (from an inflatable dinghy), the edge of the lava on the south side of Naboiyoton and along the western, northern and eastern shores of the small lake.

Ornithologically the most interesting discovery was the existence of a small heronry on the low rocky islands in the small lake. Two nests of the Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* and one of the Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath* were observed. All three appeared to have been constructed from coarse dry grass laid in notches in the rock, about 2m above the surface of the lake. The nests were estimated to be about 60cm in diameter in the case of the Grey Herons and somewhat larger for the Goliath Heron. Unfortunately all observations had to be made through binoculars at a range of about 100m and it is possible that other nests existed, concealed from view by the rugged nature of the islands. Grey Herons were sitting on both nests and a Goliath Heron was standing on its nest. An immature Goliath Heron was nearby. Mackworth-Praed and Grant record that Goliath Herons breed "on the shores of Lake Rudolf among large boulders", but this behaviour does not appear to be common for the Grey Heron whose preferred nesting sites are tall trees or reedbeds. In any case, few breeding sites have been located in Kenya.

In the extremely barren conditions which prevail it was not surprising to find an almost complete absence of land fauna. The only resident passerine land birds seen near camp were the Brown-tailed Rock-chat *Cercomela scotocerca*, the Cinnamon-breasted Rock-bunting *Emberiza tahapisi* and Fan-tailed Ravens


LAKE RUDOLF
Wargess
Naboiyoton
Camp
Small lake
Recent lavas
Older Volcanics
Older Volcanics
Teleki's Volcano
N
0 1 2 3 4 5
km
Ash Cones
Recent Lava Flows

Sketch map showing the lava field of Teleki's Volcano

Corvus rhipidurus. No game was seen and the only avain predators observed were one Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* and an Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*.

About twenty common species of "water birds" were seen around the bay and the small lake and certainly this number could be increased considerably by a longer period of observation. A checklist of the species seen is given in the Appendix.

I would like to record our deep appreciation to Mr A. Hopson and the research staff and crew of the fisheries vessel *Halcyon* for their great kindness and assistance to our party.

APPENDIX Checklist of Bird Species seen.

Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens*
Darter *Anhinga rufa*
Long-tailed Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus*
White-necked Cormorant *P. carbo*
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Goliath Heron *A. goliath*
Great White Egret *Egretta alba*
Little Egret *E. garzetta*
Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
Wood Ibis *Ibis ibis*
Lesser Flamingo *Phoenicopterus minor* . . . A 'string' overhead.
African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*
Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*
Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*
Water Thicknee *Burhinus vermiculatus* . . . On shore of small lake, with crocodiles and Spur-wing Plovers.
Spur-wing Plover *Vanellus spinosus*
Skimmer *Rhynchops flavirostris*
Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
Grey-headed Gull *L. cirrocephalus*
Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* . . . One only
Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea* . . . . The most abundant bird in the area. Flocks of up to 100 birds were frequently seen flying to and from the islands on the small lake from the western shore of Lake Rudolf.
Fan-tailed Raven *Corvus rhipidurus* . . . Parties of up to six were seen on the lava field.
Brown-tailed Rock-chat *Cercomela scotocerca* . . Two-three near camp.
Cinnamon-breasted Rock-bunting *Emberiza tahapisi*

N.J. Skinner,
Box 30197,
Nairobi.

POSSIBLE OCCURRENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIGO-BIRD *HYPOCHERA AMAUROPTERYX* ON THE KENYA COAST

From 2nd to 22nd August 1972, Indigo-birds, *Hypochera* sp., were found to be common in and around Malindi and up to the Sabaki (Galana) River mouth a few kilometres to the north. Of the numerous males observed in the field, probably almost fifty per cent had bills varying in colour from deep pinkish red to yellowish orange, whereas the rest had white or pale pinkish bills.

It appears from the literature consulted (Praed & Grant 1960, and Hall & Moreau 1970) that the only form that is known to have a bill other than white or pale pinkish is *H. amauropteryx*. White (1963) lumps all Indigo-birds into one species, *chalybeata*, which he puts in the genus *Vidua* and makes *amauropteryx* a synonym of the subspecies *funerea*. However, Hall & Moreau (*op. cit.*) retain the genus *Hypochera*, and classify the Indigo-birds into eleven species. They state that *amauropteryx* parasitises the Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*.

Praed & Grant (*op. cit.*) record *amauropteryx* as far north as Central Tanzania, whereas Hall & Moreau (*op. cit.*) do not record it north of southern Tanzania, but state that the population of Central Tanzania shows integration between *centralis* and *amauropteryx*. They also mention that there are some specimens of *amauropteryx* with white bills. Williams (1957) says that *amauropteryx* 'has been recorded on the Kenya coast near Malindi . . . . '. I can trace no other records for Kenya. Since the host *L. senegala* does occur on the Kenya coast, it is possible that *H. amauropteryx* does so also. However, since many of the birds had white bills, but apparently differed in no other respect, it is possible that they are hybrids. Another possibility is that more than one species was involved, in mixed flocks, of which *amauropteryx* was one and the other, a white-billed form, e.g. *centralis* or *ultramarina*. A firm conclusion must await the collection of specimens.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337,
Kapsabet, Kenya.

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ELECTROCUTION OF FRUIT BATS AND BIRDS

Mr Harper expressed interest in the death by electrocution of birds and bats in his note on the 'Demise of a Fruit Bat' (*antea* pp.157-8). In areas where large fruit bats are abundant this is not an uncommon sight. I recently saw one hanging in Kilindini Road, Mombasa , and one can see many on any day in and around Kampala where there is a large roost of the Straw-coloured Fruit Bat *Eidolon helvum*.

Birds are less likely to be affected because they perch upwards from the wire and do not hang downwards. On vertically arranged wires a bird will choose the upper one, or a lower one if there is sufficient headroom. In neither case would more than one wire be touched.

In some orchards in Essex, England and possibly other parts of the country in the 1950's electrocution was used as a method of attempting to destroy the rapidly increasing populations of the Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*. The Bullfinch is very partial to the developing buds of many trees such as apples and cherries. The method used was as follows: poles, about 5 to 7m high were erected, and attached to them were electric wires in pairs a few centimetres apart arranged horizontally. A bird perching on one would often use the other in order to wipe its beak, and hence electrocute itself. Since bullfinches rarely if ever perch on wires, the method was a failure but did considerable damage to other birds, e.g. Swallows *Hirundo rustica*, Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* and various buntings *Emberiza* spp. Dozens of carcasses could be found daily in many orchards. After years of intense opposition from local naturalists, I believe this method has now been abandoned.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337,
Kapsabet.

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THE OCCURRENCE OF THE GREY APALIS *APALIS CINEREA* ON MT. MARSABIT

Moreau (1966), in a chapter on montane forest avifauna, states that *Apalis cinerea* has been recorded on Marsabit in the past, but that no specimens can be traced in museums, and that it has not been found there in recent years. He suggests that the record(s) were due to error or that the populations were transitory. However, Hall & Moreau (1970) do have a plot for this species at Marsabit.

On 21st and 22nd August 1971, I found it to be a common bird in many parts of the forest, in fact one of the very few species of bird in the forest proper. Ornithologists visiting Marsabit in recent years may have visited parts of the forest where the species was absent at that particular time of the year.

Many forest species do appear to be present or absent in a particular part of an extensive forest, presumably due to changes in food supply, as no sizeable forest is uniform, although in some cases the presence or absence may not be real, but due to differences in behaviour associated with climate, breeding etc.

Clive F. Mann,
Box 337,
Kapsabet.

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WOOLLY-NECKED STORK *CICONIA EPISCOPUS* NEAR DAR ES SALAAM

According to Hazel Britton's summary of the Nest Record Scheme in the June *Bulletin* there is no recorded instance of breeding for the Woolly-necked Stork in Tanzania.

Although the following does not constitute proof of breeding it does suggest that the species probably breeds in at least one site near Dar es Salaam and indicates that this coastal strip may support a few resident pairs.

I have recorded the species in every month from mangrove swamps in the Dar es Salaam area. Most of my records come from the Kunduchi swamp but I have also recorded single birds and pairs from Mboamaji and Mjimwema (south of Dar) and near Bagamoyo at Karege Salt Pans, Mbegani and Kaole.

The Kinduchi swamp appears to have a resident population of up to two pairs. Most of my records involve birds flying over the mangroves in the morning and evening for they appear to be crepuscular and/or nocturnal feeders and spend most of the day in a group of tall mangroves (where they also probably nest). I have never seen birds on the reef or the open shore but I have twice recorded them stalking about on the sparse open grass bordering the salt flats. When I have visited Kunduchi before dawn I have invariably found them feeding in the salt pans or among the more open mangroves. They are often very tame and allow close approach to within twenty metres but after an hour or so of daylight will leave the pans to roost in the trees.

On one such occasion, on 9th December 1970 I had the good fortune to see a pair of these magnificent birds displaying. In the dim light of dawn one bird pranced round the other in irregular circles with half outstretched wings and lowered head. Its purple-sheened breast feathers were puffed out to make a broad ruff and it often nodded its head and clappered its bill. The stationary bird would also nod its head and raise its wings although it never changed its position and rarely clappered. The prancing bird occasionally picked up pieces of dead vegetation although it always dropped them immediately. After about ten minutes, during which there was no physical contact between the two birds, the prancing bird flew off into the tall trees and the stationary bird began feeding normally.

I saw no further signs of breeding activity although I saw storks at Kunduchi regularly during the next few months. However, on 21st October 1971 I found four Woolly-necked Storks feeding together. Two of them were almost certainly immatures and one was seen to half-heartedly beg food from one of the adults.

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar es Salaam.

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DO LAPPET-FACED VULTURES KILL PREY OR

ARE THEY ONLY SCAVENGERS?

On 26th July this year, while in the Serengeti, about 15km from Naabi Hill in the direction of Ngorongoro, we noticed, about 100m off the road, two Golden Jackals *Canis aureus* running fast towards a small group of birds of prey. When they had approached within a few metres of the birds the jackals swerved off and ran away as fast as they could. We drove up to the birds and found a Lappet-faced Vulture *Aegypius tracheliotus* pulling a Golden Jackal apart. Watching were three Rüppell's Griffons *Gyps rueppellii*, two White-backed Vultures *G. bengalensis* and two Tawny Eagles *Aquila rapax*. The Lappet-faced Vulture was successfully resisting all attempts by the other birds to secure a share of the prey. Leaving after about 20 minutes, we noticed about 200m away a similar group of birds of prey, again dominated by a Lappet-faced Vulture which was also eating a Golden Jackal. The other vultures and eagles were continuously threatened by the Lappet-faced Vulture if they came within two metres.

We assumed that the jackals had been killed by one or other of these birds of prey, but there were circling in the sky nearby, two Martial Eagles *Polemaetus bellicosus* which we saw landing about 100m away from the second dead jackal. Do Lappet-faced Vultures kill their prey or did the Martial Eagles kill the jackals and were subsequently dispossessed by the other birds of prey?

Hugh Gordon,
Box 44701,
Nairobi.

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BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER AT LAKE RUDOLF

On 2nd September 1972, during a routine wader count at Ferguson's Gulf, Lake Rudolf we saw a Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus*. The bird was on the margin of a sand-bar in the south-west corner of the gulf in company with Little Stints *Calidris minutus*, Curlew Sandpipers *C. ferruginea*, Marsh Sandpipers *Tringa stagnatilis* and Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*. The striking head pattern at first suggested a Jack Snipe *Gallinago minima* but closer inspection showed that we were dealing with a small active sandpiper. The following field observations were made:

> Size, slightly larger than a Little Stint. Bill dark, noticeably down-curved. Legs, relatively short. Crown boldly marked with three blackish stripes, alternating with whitish stripes. A further black stripe running through each eye. Upperparts generally dark but regularly patterned with narrow pale buff edging to the wing feathers. Two pale longitudinal stripes on the back add to the snipe-like appearance. Breast closely streaked with pale buff ending abruptly below. Underparts white. In flight the most noticeable features are a broad but subdued pale wing bar and a black bar down the centre of the rump

and tail.

The sandpiper was feeding energetically on chironomid midges in shallow marginal water. It may be of interest to note that during the previous two weeks, two Terek Sandpipers *Tringa terek* were present on the same stretch of shore.

Jane and Tony Hopson,
Lake Rudolf Fisheries Research Project,
Ferguson's Gulf,
Private Mail Bag,
Kitale.

This is the first Kenya record of the Broad-billed Sandpiper; it has been recorded previously from Uganda (specimen) and Tanzania (photographs and a sight record).

Ed.

NEWS OF OUR (TANZANIAN) NATIONAL PARKS

I stopped to help some people mend a puncture on the Great North Road going south. They had been on a visit to the National Parks and extolled the charms of Arusha National Park in particular. They recommended me to visit the place at my first opportunity and I trust it was not an anticlimax to their eulogy when I mentioned that I lived there.

It is, certainly a beautiful park and full of interest for naturalists. In the diversity of habitats ranging from forests to moorland, babbling brooks, soda lakes, and breath-taking views, over 60 species of mammals, 400 species of birds and 1200 species of flowering plants and ferns have been found; and for good measure, just to make it an East African park with a dif difference, there are no lions!

This lovely little park used to be known as Ngurdoto Crater National Park. A day spent having a grandstand view from the crater rim of the animals within can do you a lot of good. It is about the best demonstration of ecological tranquility that I know.

It is a great thrill to see so many animals of so many kinds going about their daily chores of eating and sleeping, and all quite oblivious that such a creature as *Homo sapiens* exists. Much that we have heard about nature being red in tooth and claw seems rather absurd in such circumstances. All the animals get on well together. Rhino and elephant meet on equal terms. Bushbuck mingle with baboons. Buffalo and warthog, calf and piglet, share the smae pasture, and the grass is always green in spite of year long use. He would, indeed, be a hard man who did not contemplate the advantages of human affairs being equally free of stress.

But there have been ecological stresses in the park, and of course they have been mainly caused by man. The animals have been hunted, theforest cut down and fires have raged as fiercely at Momela as anywhere else in Africa. The degraded areas have been invaded by alien weeds and infested by mole-rats, consequently treatment is necessary so as to restore the state of naturalness.

This has been mainly directed to correcting imbalances resulting from these disturbances. Three issues have been considered: one, the natural course of plan succession; two, the impact of animals on the vegetation; and three, the fire hazard.

I think the Tanzania National Park Service can claim to have made sound progress in the management of their parks on these lines. But complete cures for all our troubles will take time and cost a lot of money.

So please do not be too hard on us when you pass through the gate of the Arusha park. See how many of the animals are young and healthy. Be assured we are monitoring the grazing so as to get early warning of any over population. Remember grass is better grazed than burnt, and that optimum utilization reduces the fire hazard and so benefits regeneration of bush which is needed for the browsing animals.

Don't slate the elephants too much for bashing the secondary trees. But notice the healthy regeneration of the future forest coming up under the dead and dying acacias. Be assured we are monitoring the browse potential of the bush as the course of plant succession progresses.

Don't think we are slipping if you see us burning the unused tussock grass. But notice the patchy nature of the burn, which effectively reduces the risk of disastrous fires later on in the year. Do not, however, emulate some recent campers by starting a fire yourself. Luckily they only burnt down their own tent because our fire precautions had been well prepared.

D. Vesey-FitzGerald.
Arusha National Park,
Box 3134,
Arusha, Tanzania.

BOTANY GARDEN IN DAR ES SALAAM

Members may be interested to know of the continued existence of the old Botany Garden in Dar es Salaam, founded by the Germans before 1914. The early state of the garden is well documented in Holtz's book "Fuehrer durch den Park in Dar es Salaam", published in Dar es Salaam in 1914.

During a short visit on the afternnon of 26th August 1972 I watched three Kakelaars *Phoeniculus purpureus* noisily exploring the upper branches of a large fig tree. I recorded the following trees and shrubs:

Chrysophyllum cainito (Sapotaceae), Star Apple, with fruits; *Manilkara zapota* (Sapotaceae), Sapodilla, with fruits; *Calliandra surinamensis* (Mimosaceae), a small shrub with flowers and fruits; *Chlorophora excelsa* (Moraceae), Mvule, two large specimens; *Callistemon citrinus* (Myrtaceae), Bottle Brush, several small trees; *Sapindus saponaria* (Sapindaceae), Soapberry, two small trees with fruit; *Azadirachta indica* (Meliaceae), Nim (or Neem) one old tree, damaged with flowers; *Tectona grandis* (Verbenaceae), Teak, in fruit; *Leucaena leucocephala* (Mimosaceae), in fruit; *Ficus benjamina*, several small trees; there are several large fig trees which I was unable to identify; *Spathodea campanulata* (Bignoniaceae), African Tulip Tree or Nandi flame, a tall specimen in full flower; *Sterculia foetida* (Sterculiaceae), several tall trees with fruits; *Adenanthera pavonina* (Mimosaceae), Bead Tree, in fruit; *Enterolobium contortisiliquum* (Mimosaceae),several large trees, in fruit; *Aleurites moluccana* (Euphorbiaceae), Candle Nut, one tree in fruit; *Trachylobium verrucosum* (Caesalpiniaceae), Gum Copal, one large tree; *Hura crepitans* (Euphorbiaceae), Sand-box, several large trees; *Averrhoa carambola* (Oxalidaceae), Carambola, one small tree, in flower; *Erythrina abyssinica*, three trees without flowers or fruit (one tree was labelled but I have not tried to check the authenticity of the name); *Crescentia cujete* (Bignoniaceae) Calabash - tree, two specimens, both with young fruit, one in flower.

Although such a short list of 20 species seen on one afternnon cannot give a full account of the present state of this old garden, it does indicate that it is worth a visit next time you are in Dar es Salaam.

Brian J. Harris,
Box 3506 ,
Dar es Salaam.

HIPPOPOTAMUS DEFENDING CARCASS?

The following observations were made on 12th March 1972 and concern the behaviour of a fully-grown hippopotamus in the presence of the carcass of another individual of similar size to itself, and a number of crocodiles.

The incident took place at about 1700h in the River Nile, about 5km to the west of Chobe, Murchison Falls National Park, Uganda. We were able to watch the animals from the bank, at a distance of 50m or so, for about a quarter of an hour. The carcass was bloated and whitish. When first seen, it appeared to be being pushed off-shore by a crocodile. Shortly afterwards it was seen to be muzzled fairly actively by several crocodiles. At least four were involved, possibly as many as six. They were of medium size (2 - 3m). At this point in time a live hippopotamus appeared in the vicinity of the carcass which was now in deeper water of a fairly still pool below a small fall in the river, which here consists of a series of rapids.

The live hippopotamus stayed very close to the carcass, and from then onwards no crocodile was seen to spend more than a few moments at the carcass. Those which approached close to the carcass, soon submerged and disappeared from sight. For most of the time, the crocodiles remained at a distance of from 5 - 20m away, swimming slowly around, or sometimes towards the carcass. Swimming away was apparently done under water.

The approach of a crocodile to within a short distance of the carcass was usually followed by a turmoil in the water, ending with the appearance of the live hippopotamus next to the carcass. The crocodile apparently swam away below the surface. Twice, crocodiles swimming up to the carcass turned around and swam away again after approaching to within two or three metres.

Two possible explanations for the observed behavioural interaction between the crocodiles and the live hippopotamus can be propounded. It may have been that the crocodiles in approaching the hippopotamus carcass were entering the territorial waters of the live hippopotamus and hence were being chased from the territory. However, to us the more likely explanation of the observed behaviour is that the carcass was being defended by the live hippopotamus from the attacks of the crocodiles.

J. Phillipson, Dept. of Zoology,
University of Oxford, England.

D.E. Pomeroy, Dept. of Zoology,
Makerere University, Box 7062,
Kampala, Uganda.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

BIRDS NATURALISED IN EAST AFRICA

A.D. Forbes-Watson's note on this subject in the August *Bulletin* prompts me to place on record some of my observations in the Dar es Salaam area.

Ringnecked Parrakeet *Psittacula krameri*

I have two records (September 1970 and 1971) of single birds in suburban Dar. I suspect they were escaped cagebirds.

Fischer's Lovebird *Agapornis fischeri*

There is certainly a well established feral population in the Dar area. I have recorded flocks in the middle of the town and in rural areas where they are associated with baobab trees and often roost in coconut palms.

Yellow-collared Lovebird *Agapornis personata*

This species also has a large feral population in the Dar es Salaam area. It appears to be more common in the suburban areas than the preceding species but is less often seen in rural areas. The type specimen comes from Serian in Pangani District which must be right on the eastern edge of the present 'wild' range. Is it not possible that at least some of the Dar es Salaam birds represent a natural extension of this range?

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

I have never recorded this species in Dar es Salaam although the Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* is a well established town bird. There still seems to be a thriving population of House Sparrows in Zanzibar town. It is possible that the decline in sea traffic between Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam over the past few years has acted against any replenishment of the initial colonising population and that the Grey-headed Sparrow has dominated the sparrow niche successfully as a result.

Java Sparrow *Padda oryzivora*

I have never recorded this species in the Dar es Salaam area.

Indian House Crow *Corvus splendens*

Still present in Zanzibar town. In Dar es Salaam I have recorded it from April to October and once in January. Flocks of up to twenty are not uncommon around the fishing villages (such as Msasani and Kunduchi) during the south east trades. Their close association with the coast suggests that they are mainly windborne wanderers. I think however that there is a good chance that the species breeds locally in small numbers. Any large expansion in numbers to pest proportions would undoubtedly be hindered by the large resident population of Pied Crow *Corvus albus*. Nevertheless, the Indian House Crow manages to make a nuisance of itself among the village chickens and the local wader populations (see *E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* 1971 p.176).

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar es Salaam.

Sir,

CASPIAN PLOVER *CHARADRIUS ASIATICUS* AT THE COAST

I was interested to read Lise Campbell's note on Caspian Plovers at Kilifi on the Kenya coast in the April *Bulletin*. Although I have never seen such large flocks near Dar es Salaam it may be worth recording that the species appears to be a regular passage migrant here. I have recorded parties of up to five from August to December mainly on the dry salt flats bordering saline pools. All of my birds have been in non-breeding plumage and most in the yellowish-buff immature dress. They appear quite ready to mix with the large flocks of Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* and Mongolian Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus* on the dry flats but they do not seem to join these flocks at the water's edge.

W.G. Harvey,
Box 9100,
Dar es Salaam.

Sir,

Has anyone lost a male Rose-ringed Parrakeet *Psittacula krameri* ? I positively identified this bird in the grounds of St. Mary's School, Nairobi yesterday, 11th September 1972.

David Parsons,
Box 40580,
Nairobi.

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Mr Bernhard Robel, a member, of Box 14589, Nairobi is studying the ground squirrels *Xerus rutilus* and *X. erythropus*. He would like to contact members who have either of these species of squirrels (not too shy) living near their houses.

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REVIEW

THE SPOTTED HYENA A study of Predation and Social Behaviour. By Hans Kruuk. Published by The University of Chicago Press. Price £6.75.

This account of the hyena's way of life must claim the attention of every naturalist. The reader may stumble at first among the figures and tables, but he will soon be running with the pack in the moonlight thrilled at shareing with the author an understanding of these interesting African mammals.

This book is a masterly achievement of observation, analysis and interpretation, contained on 300 pages, 61 figures, 58 photographs and a comprehensive list of references. The hyenas themselves emerge as a community of animals that we can never again despise. Something of their appeal and arrogance is displayed on the dust-cover photo of this fascinating book.

I am sure members will have to pick this book up again and again to read on about the trills and tragedies of the African night on the open plains. It is most rewarding to study the author's methods and presentation of field data. It is on work and records of this nature that the future successful conservation of the wildlife and wild places of Africa will depend.

D. V-FG.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Thursday 5th October, 1972 at 7.30 p.m.: Mike Hill will talk on "Insect behaviour and its application to various trapping techniques", in the British Council lecture room, Kisumu.

Sunday 8th October, 1972: Mrs Fleur N'gweno will lead a wild-flower walk in the Nairobi area. Please meet at the National Museum at 9.00a.m.

CHANGE OF DATE FROM OCTOBER 9th; Monday 16th October, 1972 at 5.15 p.m.: Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson will give an illustrated talk on "Bird Life on the Ind Indian Ocean Islands" at the Museum Hall Nairobi.

27th - 28th/29th October 1972: Camp at Kekopey on Lake Elmenteita by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Arthur Cole. Camping will be near the lake shore; this locality should offer a good opportunity to study migrant birds recently returned from the Palearctic and to see Greater Flamingoes at close quarters. There are also large numbers of plains game on the estate and lots of birds of prey. There is a hot spring area to explore too.

Campers should be self contained with equipment, food and srinking water. Members are welcome either Friday or Saturday and should make their own way to the farm. If you intend to take part in this excursion, please fill in the enclosed form and post to Mrs A.L. Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi. Directions to the camp site will be forwarded to you. Please do not bring dogs. This camp will be limited to 40 people (members and their families). Applications will be accepted on a first come first served basis, before

10th October. If, having applied, your are unable to come please inform Mrs Campbell immediately, so that others may be accomadated; her telaphone number is Nairobi 68284.

Thursday 2nd November, 1972 at 7.30 p.m.: John Harper will talk on "Natural History of the Rift Valley, Kenya", in the British Council lecture room in Kisumu.

12th November, 1972: Mr A. Duff-McKay will lead an excursion on Small Mammal Identification.

13th November, 1972 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Lecture by Dr G.M.O. Maloiy on "Animal Physiology in Drier Area".

4th December, 1972 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Lecture by Dr John Sale on "Hyrax and elephants".

8th January, 1973 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Lecture by Dr G.A. Classen on "Hunting Succulents in East Africa".

Wednesday morning Bird Walks have been resumed. Please meet at the National Museum at 8.45 a.m.

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NEW MEMBERS - OCTOBER 1972

Full members:

Mr E.W. Crawford, Ministry of Agriculture, Box 30028, Nairobi.
Mr Niels P. Finnerup, Box 74, Kikuyu.
Mr E.C. Hancock, Box 49190, Nairobi.
Mr Nigel Hartley, Box 20, Kericho, Kenya.
Mr Omary Moses, E.A. Ornithological Safaris, Box 48019, Nairobi.
Mr Clive Nealon, c/o I.B.M., Box 1634, Kitwe, Zambia.
Mr & Mrs Micheal Nield, Box 160, Kitale, Kenya.
Mrs John Powelson, Box 41081, Nairobi.
Prof. J.W.S. Pringle, Box 14505, Nairobi.
Mr Mohd Rashid, E.A. Ornithological Safaris, Box 48019, Nairobi.
Dr Lawrence P Richards, c/o National Museum, Box 40658, Nairobi.
Mrs John Squire, Box 40, Njoro, Kenya.
Mrs James Tobin, Box 30197, Nairobi.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

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BULLETIN

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EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN NOVEMBER 1972

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HAZARDS TO BREEDING BIRDS IN THE ARUSHA NATIONAL PARK

While working on the breeding seasons of birds in the Arusha National Park, my staff and I found a large number of nests during the years 1970 - 1972. Unfortunately I was unable to return a second time to most of the nests, but of those which were revisited, there were many that had been destroyed, disturbed, the contents eaten or deserted. The various and frequent hazards attendant on nesting birds were a surprise to me and below I describe some of them.

Firstly it must be admitted that the actual searching for, finding and examination of a nest must expose it to predation to some extent. A trail is made to the nest, the cover is often disturbed, however careful one may be, usually the occupant flies off leaving the nest open to predators, and at some stages, deserts altogether. For this reason, few nests were revisited and usually only those that had been without eggs on first examination or a parent bird necessary for identification.

Disturbance and destruction was caused accidentally by many of the larger species of animals in the Park, such as elephant, buffalo, rhino or giraffe, whose passage through the bush and grass dislodged, overturned or displaced nests. Feeding elephants occasionally pulled the pendant nests of weaverbirds or sunbirds from the boughs of trees when stripping off the leaves and twigs. Whether nests were actually eaten along with the leaves and twigs is not known, but examination of the ground below sometimes failed to find the nests. There was also an instance of an almost completed nest of a pair of yellow-bellied waxbills *Estrilda melanotis* which was deserted when the foliage surrounding it was nibbled off by a giraffe.

Smaller mammals such as monkeys, mongooses and especially baboons take many eggs and young. Inspections of known nests after the passage of a feeding troop of baboons have often found destroyed nests or missing eggs and young. In protected areas such as National Parks baboon troops frequently have over a hundred members, and the destruction of nests must be considerable.

Genets go to great trouble to get to nests. In the roof of one of the Park's houses there was a family of these agile little creatures (they or others are regularly caught and transported to other parts of the Park) one of which bit or clawed its way through the ceiling-board of the eaves to get at a swallow's nest. From the roof of another house, genets leapt to a very small bough of a nearby tree, then climbed down another very fine branch to a weaver's nest to eat the contents. The bridging branch was then cut back, but later, other weaver's nests were taken by the genet climbing the trunk, so corrugated iron sheets were nailed round it, which put a stop to that game. Snakes take eggs and young. I once saw a snake engorging the last of a brood of Long-billed Pipits *Anthus similis*. Regarding avian predators, the only corvids in the Park are White-necked Ravens *Corvus albicollis*, a pair of which were once seen plundering a nest in a tree.

Insects also add to the hazards, a few nests have been seen covered with safari ants, and once two nestling Yellow Bishops *Euplectes capensis* were found as almost skeletal remains after such an attack. The nest of a pair of Saddle-bill Storks *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* was seen to be deserted in 1972 and a closer examination found a large swarm of bees clustered beneath it, which later built combs around the base of the tree.

High winds, of course, blow nests down. A Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Nectarinia senegalensis* hung its nest from the eaves of one of the Park houses. The almost completed nest was blown down, but being immediately observed, was stuck back again with scotch-tape, and young were subsequently reared. Wind also blows down trees. A nest each of the Augur Buzzard *Buteo rufofuscus*, Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti*, and Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* came to grief in this manner.

Water too, does its share, eating away river-banks and collapsing the nesting tunnels of African Sand Martins *Riparia paludicola* and probably other bank-nesting species. On the Small Momela lake three pairs of Dabchicks *Podiceps ruficollis* built on fallen trees that were partially submerged in the water. They lost their eggs to the combined forces of wind and water, the waves overturning or washing away the nests.

In the Arusha National Park little of the soil has good cohesive powers and is rather unsuitable for use in construction of swallows nests, and frequently the various species of Hirundines have their nests fall from under them. In one case however, a gate-clerk noticed a crack appearing in a nest built just above his counter, and once again scotch-tape came to the rescue.

Take-overs are not uncommon, especially the nests of the Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* by the Mosque Swallow *Hirundo senegalensis*. One such take-over was capped by a pair of White-rumped Swifts *Apus caffer*, who evicted the swallows and reared their own young in it. A pair of Bearded Woodpeckers *Thripias namaquus* excavated a hole, which when near completion was taken over by a pair of Striped Kingfishers. After a few days tenancy they were ousted by a pair of Broad-billed Rollers who reared their family therein. Finally near my house, a female Scarlet-chested Sunbird almost completed a nest, but towards the end was so much harried by a pair of Bronze Sunbirds *Nectarinia kilimensis*, that she abandoned it. The other birds then dismantled much of it to use for their own nest nearby. During the whole of this performance the male Scarlet-chested Sunbird sat in a tree singing.

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Gaborone, Botswana.

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NATURALISED BIRDS ON THE KENYA COAST

In his note on naturalised birds (*antea* 1972:144-5) Forbes-Watson gives the ranges of the Fischer's Lovebird and Yellow-collared Lovebird, *Agapornis fischeri* and *A. personata* in Kenya, but omits the Kenyan coast as part of either of their ranges. However, he mentions that they occur on the Tanzanian coast, *fischeri* predominating at Tanga and *personata* predominating at Dar es Salaam.

Our records, all for August 1972, show that both species occur, one commonly, in the Mombasa area.

A. personata	Bamburi: up to eight seen daily. PLB. Kikambala: small parties seen on each of three visits. PLB & CFM. Shimo-la Tewa: a party of three in one area, and *c.*20 a few miles away. CFM.
A. fischeri	Shelley Beach, south of Mombasa: eight together. CFM.

With the larger party at Shimo-la Tewa was a bird that looked basically like *personata*, but with lower throat to chest yellowish-orange. This was thought at first to be a hybrid, but seems to fit the description of a known variation in the plumage of this species in which orange may be present on the upper breast and even on the yellow back of the neck. (Moreau, R.E. 1948. Aspects of evolution in the parrot genus *Agapornis*. *Ibis* 90:453.)

Also a party of *Agapornis* was once heard but not seen at the Oceanic Hotel on Mombasa Island. CFM.

Neither of us had recorded *Agapornis* at the coast before. In April last year we spent over ten days at Kikambala without a single sighting, suggesting that their absence from that area (at that time) was real.

There do not appear to be any records in print of *Agapornis* on the Kenya coast, so perhaps they have become established fairly recently. A third species, *A. pullaria*, the Red-headed Lovebird extends eastwards from Uganda into extreme western Kenya, but appears to be scarce and restricted.

The Indian House Crow *Corvus splendens* was found to be common at Bamburi during August this year, but absent from Kikambala PLB. This suggests that the limit given by Forbes-Watson (*op. cit.*) at Mtwapwa may be its real limit.

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Kenya. Kenya.

* * *

SOMALI OSTRICH IN NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK

On the morning of 10th September 1972 shortly after we had entered Nairobi National Park by the Mombasa Road Gate, my son drew my attention to a "funny coloured ostrich". The bird he had spotted had the typical blue-grey neck and thighs of the male Somali Ostrich *Struthio camelus molybdophanes*.
On 30th September I again saw this bird (or another similar one) near Eland's Hollow and was able to observe it from very close range. On both these occasions the habitat was gall-acacia scrub growing on black cotton soil.

This race is recorded as occuring mainly north of the Tana River. Its occurence, unless as the result of release by the Park Authorities, in an area noted as a stronghold of *S.c. massaicus* is a "violation" of the "laws" regarding the distribution of races and indicates a situation of considerable biological interest.

J.F. Reynolds,
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NEST RECORD SCHEME

List of species for which there are no breeding records for one or more of the East African countries - Part III.

Asio capensis	African Marsh Owl	U
Bubo capensis	Mackinder's Owl	T
B. poensis	Nduk Eagle Owl	U T
Glaucidium capense	Barred Owlet	K
G. perlatum	Pearl-Spotted Owlet	U T
G. tephronotum	Red-chested Owlet	K U
Otus ireneae	Sokoke Scops Owl	K
O. scops	Scops Owl	K U
Scotopelia peli	Fishing Owl	K U T
Tyto capensis	Cape Grass Owl	U T
Caprimulgus binotatus	Forest Dusky Nightjar	U
C. climacurus	Long-tailed Nightjar	K
C. donaldsoni	Donaldson-Smith's Nightjar	T
C. inornatus	Plain Nightjar	U T
C. poliocephalus	Abyssinian/Ruwenzori Nightjar	U
C. stellatus	Star-spotted Nightjar	K
C. tristigma	Freckled Nightjar	U
Macrodipteryx longipennis	Standard-wing Nightjar	K
Apus aequatorialis	Mottled Swift	U
A. affinis	Little Swift	U
A. barbatus	Black Swift	U T
A. berliozi	Forbes-Watsons Swift	K
A. horus	Horus Swift	U
A. melba	Alpine Swift	U T
A. myoptilus	Scarce Swift	K U T
A. niansae	Nyanza Swift	K U
Chaetura cassini	Cassin's Spinetail	U
C. sabini	Sabine's Spinetail	K U
C. ussheri	Mottled-throated Spinetail	U
Colius indicus	Red-faced Mousebird	T
Apaloderma narina	Narina's Trogon	U
A. vittatum	Bar-tailed Trogon	K U
Alcedo leucogaster	White-bellied Kingfisher	U
A. semitorquata	Half-collared Kingfisher	K
Halcyon badia	Chocolate-backed Kingfisher	U
H. leucocephala	Grey-headed Kingfisher	U
H. malimbica	Blue-breasted Kingfisher	T
H. senegalensis	Northern Woodland Kingfisher	K

Bucorvus abyssinicus	Abyssinian Ground Hornbill	K
Bycanistes brevis	Silvery-cheeked Hornbill	K
B. bucinator	Trumpeter Hornbill	K T
B. cylindricus	White-thighed Hornbill	U
B. subcylindricus	Black & White Casqued Hornbill	T
Tockus camurus	Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill	U
T. hemprichii	Hemprich's Hornbill	K U
T. flavirostris	Yellow-billed Hornbill	T
T. jacksoni	Jackson's Hornbill	U
T. pallidirostris	Pale-billed Hornbill	K T
Tropicranus albocristatus	White-crested Hornbill	U
Coracias abyssinica	Abyssinian Roller	K U
C. caudata	Lilac-breasted Roller	U
C. naevia	Rufous-crowned Roller	T
C. spatulata	Racquet-tailed Roller	T
Merops albicollis	White-throated Bee-eater	T
M. hirundinaceus	Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	K T
M. muelleri	Blue-headed Bee-eater	U
M. orientalis	Little Green Bee-eater	U
M. revoilii	Somali Bee-eater	K
M. variegatus	Blue-breasted Bee-eater	K U
Phoeniculus aterrimus	Black Wood-Hoopoe	U
P. bollei	White-headed Wood-Hoopoe	U
P. castaneiceps	Forest Wood-Hoopoe	K U
P. cyanomelas	Scimitar-bill	K U
Buccanodon leucotis	White-eared Barbet	K
B. whytii	Whyte's Barbet	T
Lybius bidentatus	Double-toothed Barbet	T
L. hirsutus	Hairy-brested Barbet	K
L. leucomelas	Red-fronted Barbet	U
L. melanocephalus	Brown-throated Barbet	K U
L. minor	Black-backed Barbet	T
L. rolleti	Black-breasted Barbet	U
L. rubrifacies	Red-faced Barbet	U T
L. torquatus	Black-collared Barbet	K
Pogoniulus atroflavus	Red-rumped Tinker-Bird	U
P. chrysoconus	Yellow-fronted Tinker-Bird	U T
P. coryphaeus	Western Green Tinker-Bird	U
P. leucomystax	Moustached Green Tinker-Bird	T
P. pusillus	Red-fronted Tinker-Bird	U T
P. scolopaceus	Speckled Tinker-Bird	K
Trachyphonus purpuratus	Yellow-billed Barbet	U
Indicator conirostris	Thick-billed Honey-Guide	U
I. exilis	Least Honey-Guide	U
I. meliphilus	Eastern Least Honey-Guide	K T
I. narokensis	Jackson's Honey-Guide	K U T
I. pumilio	Chapin's Pygmy Honey-Guide	K U
I. variegatus	Scaly-throated Honey-Guide	T
I. willcocksi	Willcocks' Honey-Guide	U
Melignomon zenkeri	Zenker's Honey-Guide	U
Prodotiscus insignis	Cassin's Honey-Guide	U
P. regulus	Wahlberg's Honey-Guide	K U T

Campethera bennetti	Bennett's Woodpecker	T
C. cailliautii	Little Spotted Woodpecker	K U T
C. caroli	Brown-eared Woodpecker	U
C. tullbergi	Fine-banded Woodpecker	U
Dendrocopos obsoletus	Brown-backed Woodpecker	K U T
Dendropicus gabonensis	Gabon Woodpecker	U
D. poecilolaemus	Uganda Spotted Woodpecker	K
D. stierlingi	Stierling's Woodpecker	T
Jynx ruficollis	Red-breasted Wryneck	U T
Mesopicos elliotii	Elliot's Woodpecker	U
M. griseocephalus	Grey Woodpecker	U
M. xantholophus	Yellow-crested Woodpecker	K
Thripias namaquus	Bearded Woodpecker	U
Verreauxia africana	African Piculet	U

K, U, T after a species indicates that there are no records for Kenya, Uganda or Tanzania respectively. Many of the birds on this list are "hole-nesting" species which may, in part, account for the lack of records for many quite common species. Any dated information on occupied nest-holes (or other inaccessible sites) would be most welcome, even if breeding was not actually proved. (Beware of mistaking roosting birds for breeding birds although such sites are often used for both purposes.)

The above list completes the non-passerines and I hope that more members will endeavour to dig out their records. So much data is still unpublished in personal note-books or diaries where it benefits no one. After all, the whole purpose of making field notes is to further our knowledge and record interesting observations for the future. Often, single observations appear to be of no special interest, but added to other records may throw a completely new light on a subject and so advance our knowledge of East African birds.

IMPORTANT

I will be on overseas leave from the end of November to the end of April. Would contributors please send in 1972 (or previous) cards by THE MIDDLE OF NOVEMBER. If this is not possible, please keep the cards until a new address is given in this *Bulletin*. Members should try and order enough cards to last until mid 1973 although cards will be available from the Secretary, Miss Allen or the Editor, G.C. Backhurst.

Hazel Britton,
E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record Scheme,
Box 1102, Kisumu.

LIBRARY NOTICE

Members are reminded that the Libray is open until 6 p.m. on Mondays, and also on Saturday mornings. However, from November 6th to 20th inclusive it will be shut at these times, as th Librarian will be on holiday.

EAST AFRICAN INDIGOBIRDS

Recent enquiries to the Bird Room and Mann's note (*Bulletin* 1972:167) highlight the need for some comments on the indigobirds of the genus *Hypochera*. The males of these small short-tailed parasitic weaverbirds with black plumage variously glossed with blue, violet or green and with pale bills and feet are easy enough to place as indigobirds at a glance, but it is far more difficult to assign any particular individual correctly to a species. It is impossible to identify females, 'sparrowy' males and young as all are extremely alike - the nearest one can get is often *Hypochera* sp. unless seen associated with an identified male.

Almost every authority who has attempted sorting out the various forms has come up with different ideas. White (1963) includes them all in one species *chalybeata* while Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1949) have as many as eight species; Hall & Moreau (1970) bypass the issue by stating "it is premature to classify [them] into conventional species and subspecies", and give equal rank to the eleven forms they recognise.

Until recently almost nothing was known about the breeding of indigobirds, but then Nicolai (1964) showed that in captive birds the male imitates the song of the host firefinch *Lagonosticta* sp., and the females come to him (on hearing his song) and mating takes place. Subsequently other workers, including Payne have studied this problem in the field throughout Africa and reports are being prepared by him; one on East and Southern African forms has already appeared (Payne 1968).

Now that we know that the female indigobird is attracted to the song of the host, it follows that the most logical course is to include in one species those forms which parasitise a particular firefinch species. Of the eight firefinches currently recognised (Hall & Moreau 1970), five are now known to be parasitised. All five occur in East Africa, but only three are known to be parasitised here. These are the Red-billed Firefinch *L. senegala*, the Brown-backed or African Firefinch *L. rubricata* and the Pink-backed or Jameson's Firefinch *L. rhodopareia*.

L. senegala is parasitised by two of Praed & Grant's (1955) 'species', the Purple and South African Indigobirds (No. 1435 and 1436); *rubricata* by the Green (1434) and *rhodopareia* by the Black (1438) in which they synonymise *H. purpurascens*, now recognised. To avoid confusion later, I have deliberately omitted Praed & Grant scientific names for these indigobirds. Other forms recorded by them should be ignored.

To take these parasite/host pairs in reverse sequence, the indigobird associated with *L. rhodopareia* is *H. purpurascens* which in East Africa is only known from Sigor in western Kenya and in southern Tanzania; it is distinguished from all other East African forms by having white (not coral) feet. *L. rubricata* is parasitised by *H. funerea*, in East Africa only known from near Iringa in Tanzania where the subspecies *codringtoni* occurs; it has a green sheen, unlike the other forms in which the sheen is blue or violet. The commonest species, found in all three countries and the only species known from Uganda, is *H. chalybeata* which parasitises *L. senegala*; unlike the two other species, however, three distinct subspecies are involved.

One of these, *H.c. amauropteryx* (the South African 'species' of Praed & Grant 1955) known in East Africa from Malindi (Payne *op. cit.*) and Tanzania, is easy to recognise as it has a red bill, not whitish or pinkish as in all the others; a second subspecies *H.c. ultramarina* is known from the Tana River to the north - it is white-billed and is the only form in East Africa to have black (not brown) wings and tail. The rest of the species' range in East Africa is occupied by *H. c. centralis* which is the most generalised form - pale bill, coral feet, brown wings and tail. Where the ranges of these two latter subspecies approach *amauropteryx*, as at Malindi, intermediates can be expected and no doubt the pale-billed birds mentioned by Mann (*loc. cit.*) are such. Further observations will no doubt show that the ranges are imperfectly known, especially of *purpurascens* and *funerea*.

With this reshuffle many of the English names previously used are inappropriate. In Zambia, where the same three species occur, Benson *et. al.* (1971) have got round this difficulty by attaching the word Indigobird to the host's name, thus - Red-billed Firefinch Indigobird, Brown-backed Firefinch Indigobird and Pink-backed Firefinch Indigobird! Although commendable from the biological viewpoint, these names are extremely cumbersome. I would here like to propose the English names used in the following key for use in East Africa. Incidentally, only Traylor (1966) seems to have heeded Chapin's (1964) plea for the use of the common name 'combassou' for these birds, to distinguish them from the American Indigobird or Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* (Emberizidae, Pyrrhuloxiinae).

KEY TO EAST AFRICAN ADULT MALE INDIGOBIRDS

1. Feet white . . . . White-footed Indigobird *H. purpurascens*.
   Feet coral . . . . see 2.

2. Gloss green . . . . Green Indigobird *H. funerea*.
   Gloss blue or violet . . . . Common Indigobird *H. chalybeata*. See 3.

3. Bill red, brown wings and tail . . *H.c. amauropteryx* ('S.A. Indigobird').
   Bill pale, brown wings and tail . . *H.c. centralis*.
   Bill pale, black wings and tail . . *H.c. ultramarina*.
   (Note: These last two are probably indistinguishable in the field, and hybrid populations impossible to assign to a particular subspecies).

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Ornithologist, National Museum,
Nairobi.

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DOMED PIPIT AND QUAIL NEST

With reference to Mr Reynold's notes in the *Bulletin* (1972: 132). On 1st June, 1971, I found the nest of a Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae* just off the Magadi road and this was domed. The nest was at the base of a clump of grass and the dome material was from a different species, *Eragrostis* sp. flower heads. This nest was quite extraordinary, for when found it contained two pipit eggs and two eggs of the Harlequin Quail *Coturnix delegorguei* while outside, were two more pipit eggs and five quail eggs! I collected all the quail eggs, then marked the two pipit eggs from outside the nest and returned these to the nest. The next day I found that the two marked pipit eggs had been pushed out of the nest and the bird incubating the two original eggs. How did the bird know that the two marked eggs had been outside the nest and then returned? Originally it must have been very uncomfortable for the pipit to be sitting on two small and two large eggs!

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

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AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR OF KORI BUSTARD *OTIS KORI*

On October 8th at 6 p.m. on a visit to Samburu Game Reserve we had the good fortune to watch a fight or trial of strength between two Kori Bustards. These bustards are numerous in the open parts of the Reserve, and that evening, seeing what looked like a large bunch of feathers on four legs, we drove over and found two bustards in full display holding each other by the bill and pushing and shoving backwards and forwards and round and round. The battle seemed to consist solely of this pushing and shoving; the feet and wings were not used, no blood was shed nor feathers pulled out.

We did not like to go nearer than about 40 metres for fear of disturbing them, but the battle drifted in our direction until the birds were only about 10 metres from the car. We watched for about half an hour. Most of the time both mandibles of one bird were inside both mandibles of the other. Once or twice they lost grip, but quickly caught hold again. Once for a short time the mandibles were alternating, one of one bird within both of the other.

We could not see if any special grip gave any advantage to the holder.

Finally they broke apart and there was a short scuffle while they - or one of them - tried to regain its grip, but the other had had enough. With feathers flattened, lowered head and drooping tail it ran for a short distance and then took to the air and flew away uttering a few short barks. The other meantime strutted after it looking the picture of triumph and self-satisfaction.

We have been unable to find this behaviour described in any of the books available to us. P.M.A. has a note that once in the Nairobi National Park she saw "a pair or two males together" in half display. Perhaps this was an early stage of such a contest. It should be easy to tell male from female if they are together, as the female is said to be only half the weight of the male.

Priscilla M. Allen & M.P. Clifton,
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Nairobi.

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FEEDING ASSOCIATION BETWEEN MARSH SANDPIPER AND HOTTENTOT TEAL

Several non-obligate but regular associations between different species are known in which the activities of one species facilitate the finding of food by the other. A familiar example in East Africa is Cattle Egrets *Ardeola ibis* associating with large herbivores in order to feed on insects etc. disturbed when the mammals walk through grass.

Less regular associations occur from time to time and are worth recording when observed as they reveal aspects of the adaptability of the species concerned.

On 27th September 1972 at a water hole in Nairobi National Park, I saw a Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* deliberately associating with two Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota* (a duck and a drake). As the teal fed by typical dabbling, the sandpiper kept close to them, even swimming at times, presumably because the ducks' activities disturbed aquatic organisms so that these were more easily caught by the sandpiper. When the ducks resumed feeding after a pause for preening and dozing the sandpiper immediately flew over to join them, thus clearly showing the deliberate nature of the sandpiper's behaviour.

J.F. Reynolds,
Box 40584,
Nairobi.

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WANTED

I would be most grateful if any member who has the October 1970 *Newsletter* and/or the July 1971 *Bulletin* to spare would let me have them, Thank you.

Graeme Backhurst, Box 29003,
Kabete.

UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR OF SPUR-WINGED PLOVER

On a recent visit to Samburu Game Reserve, Miss Allen and I noticed some unusual behaviour of two Spur-winged Plovers *Vanellus spinosus*. We were at the bandas at Buffalo Springs. The two plovers, after alighting and walking around for a short while feeding normally, started what we believed was "pseudo-nest making". Both of them looked straight forward, and moved one leg (it appeared that this was the one which would be used for the next step forward) forward over the ground about an inch above it, then back to level with the other foot. This was repeated rapidly five or six times and then the bird would run forward about six or seven paces to repeat the procedure. Neither bird took any notice of what the other one was doing. When an insect was disturbed by the bird it attacked immediately and in this way we saw them catch several grasshoppers and a small lizard. The lizard was caught by the body and dropped its tail, the bird watched the tail for a while, swallowed the lizard, picked up the tail and ate that too.

We can find no reference to this feeding behaviour and wonder if it has been noticed before.

M. Clifton, Entomologist,
National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

PANGOLIN

In October 1970 two pangolins, a mother and a suckling baby were brought to the Museum. After being observed the animals were stored in the Museum's deep freeze until September 1972, when both animals were taken to Zimmermann's where their skins were removed and their bodies returned to the Museum for research purposes.

Out of curiousity the stomach of one of the pangolins was opened; taking into account the fact that pangolins have no teeth for chewing insects on which they feed, it would be interesting to know how they manage to grind their food.

The stomach wall was found to be composed of three layers, namely, the outer layer which was thick and very muscular followed by a thin, relatively weak middle layer and lastly, the inner layer made up of a tough whitish tissue which was very much folded (it gave the impression of the inner wall of a hen's gizzard). Inside the stomach there was a mass of a crushed up material containing hundreds of heads of black ants *Pheidole* sp. probably *crassinoda* and particles of sand.

The large intestine was opened up as well and it was found to contain a crushed up mass of black ants. Besides that, the wall of the intestine was found to be infested by a species of tongue worm which belong to the order Pentastomida, which is often placed in the Arachnida. Tongue worms are parasitic, they suck blood from their hosts. The worms mostly live within the lungs and nasal passages of vertebrates. The principle hosts being reptiles, though mammals and birds are known to be parasitised. Some of the parasites require intermediate hosts.

Although the mother pangolin was lactating it was also pregnant. A small foetus about 10cm long was found inside it. Despite the small size of the foetus it had a comparatively long tongue and tail. The tongue was growing out of the mouth. The eyes of the foetus were discernable, and minute depressions on the body indicated possible sites for scales in the future.

At that juncture the pangolin pieces were put in a big bottle containing preserving fluid and stored in the Museum's spirit room.

I.R. Aggundey,
National Museum,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

ONE - LEG

Those members who read the story of One-Leg, our Augur Buzzard *Buteo rufofuscus* in the *Bulletin* (1972: 6-7) may be interested to know that she has produced another offspring this year.

In Feb/March she and Blackamoor were seen to mate several times and at about the same time Sambo disappeared. Chased out of their territory presumably, by his parents. Bongo, as we call the new fledgling, left the nest in mid-July and was first seen in the garden a fortnight later being fed morsels of mole rat by Blackamoor on top of the macrocarpa hedge. He was considerably younger than Sambo when he first appeared; smaller and unable to feed himself. In colouring he is greyer brown with a white patch on each shoulder and a big white blotch on his chest. His tail, too, is different being barred above brown and fawn with a wide pale fawn tip making it appear misleadingly short. His voice is harsh and squeaky rising to a shriek when soliciting food. Many times we have been able to watch old One-Leg at very close quarters tearing up mole-rats or hunks of meat and feeding them bit by bit to her shrieking offspring. Once I was previliged to see all three feeding off a mole together, One-Leg making sure that Bongo got the biggest share.

Bongo is now able to tear up his own food and is sometimes very aggressive, zooming down on One-Leg and Blackamoor and snatching their mole from under their feet on the hedge. He will then stand crouched over it, wings outspread, in a dog-in-the-manger attitude, shrieking. On one such occasion I watched One-Leg stalking round and round him, every now and then making a snatch at the mole with her beak, but quite unable to wrest it from him. Then Blackamoor suddenly appeared overhead and both shot off - Bongo still clutching the mole in his talons.

A splendid example of the economy of nature has been afforded us by the Rufous Sparrows *Passer iagoensis* who were quick to realise the value of the mole fur scattered on the hedgetop as a lining for their nearby nest in a Cape Chestnut.

Alas - this is our last year here, but I hope that the friend to whom we have sold the farm will keep an eye on old One-Leg and let me know from time whether she is still alive. As the years have gone by, the black of her neck has grown into two long black streaks reaching well down her throat to her breast. Apart from her injured leg she is quite unmistakable.

Daphne Sheppard,
Tumaini,
P.O. Turi, Kenya.

Sir,

After visiting Lakes Nakuru and Magadi and seeing the wealth of bird life on them, I wonder if anyone can enlighten me on how the resident birds such as Flamingoes deal with the problem of removal of excess salts from the water they drink. Presumably the migratory waders etc. also have a similar problem. Marine birds, e.g. Gulls have special salt secreting glands above the eyes to remove excess salts from the body fluids which have been taken up in the water they drink. Is this the case in the birds mentioned?

Micheal Sugg,
Agoro Sare High School,
Box 10008, Oyugis,
S. Nyanza, Kenya.

Sir,

J.G. Williams in his Field Guide states that the European Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* is a very uncommon visitor to the coasts of Kenya and Tanganyika.

It may be of interest, therefore, to note that we saw two of them on four successive days from 17th to 20th September 1972, feeding on the rocks and sandbanks between Msimbazi Creek and the harbour entrance at Dar es Salaam. We then had to be away for a week and on our return on 28th September the birds were no longer there. Perhaps other members of the Society in Dar es Salaam have seen them on other beaches.

Roberts (Birds of South Africa) states that they have been recorded from the Cape Peninsula.

M.C.B. Williams,
Box 9182,
Dar es Salaam.

Sir,

Further to Clive Mann's note in the October *Bulletin* on the South African Indigobird *Hypochera amauropteryx*. On 17th June 1972, in what appeared to be an abandoned sisal estate, in the coastal belt 10 - 12km north of Dar es Salaam, I observed one male Indigobird with 3 or 4 females or immature birds. I had a good view of them feeding at the side of the track for about twenty minutes, and the male's bill was certainly red, not pale pink or white.

From time to time they would fly up on to the telegraph wires and sit there for a few seconds.

I assumed at the time, on the basis of the account in Roberts' Birds of South Africa, that this was *H. amauropteryx*. It seems that my assumption has a possible confirmation.

M.C.B. Williams,
Box 9182,
Dar es Salaam.

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PETER MUTESHY

Peter Muteshy, Assistant Curator of Entomology at the National Museum and an E.A.N.H.S. committee member, died on 3rd October 1972. He was a very able Assistant in the Department having control of the entire moth collection and was writing a paper on a group of Nymphalid Butterflies.

He was always cheerful and worked hard, always willing to exert himself to the full on any project at hand. He broadcast on the radio and in the newspapers to try to save Kakamega Forest, where he was born and brought up.

Before his many years at the Museum he was a teacher of English and Swahili, and a relief station master on the East African Railways.

He will be greatly missed in the Department; a replacement will be very hard to find. Our sympathy goes out to his widow and children.

M.P.C.

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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

I have now received over thirty replies to my letter published in the August issue of the *Bulletin*, ALL were in favour of the *Bulletin* in its present form. I can only assume that those who havent written are either in favour or do not feel strongly about the matter.

But one thing does emerge quite clearly from most of the letters. There is a great deal of appreciation for the punctuality, regularity and content of the *Bulletin* and members pay a well deserved tribute to Daphne and Graeme Backhurst for the work they put in in editing and producing it. Having acted as editor for a brief period, I am well aware of the amount of work involved and the Executive Committe and I associate ourselves wholeheartedly with the sentiments expressed by members.

A number of very useful suggestions and comments have been made, both on the contents of the *Bulletin* and on the activities of the Society and these will be studied carefully by the Editor and the Executive Committee.

My sincere thanks to all those who took the trouble to write. I think it has been a worthwhile exercise.

John Karmali,
President, E.A.N.H.S.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Sunday, 12th November 1972: Due to the illness of Mr A. Duff-McKay, the small mammal identification excursion has had to be postponed. Instead there will be a flower and bird walk, please meet at the Museum at 9 a.m.

Monday 13th November 1972, at 5.15 p.m: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr G.M.O. Maloiy will give an illustrated lecture on "Animal Physiology in drier areas."

Monday 4th December 1972: Lecture, Dr J.B. Sale on "Hyrax and Elephants".

Sunday 17th December 1972: Field excursion to Ulu to Lady Wilson's farm. Details in next issue.

Monday 8th January 1973: Lecture, Mr G.A. Classen. "Hunting Succulents in East Africa".

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NEW MEMBERS - NOVEMBER 1972

Full members:

Mr John Arkle, Box 30091, Nairobi.
Dr P.S. Brandly, Box 14376, Nairobi.
Mr J.E. Douglas, Box 30183, Nairobi.
Dr Lars Karstad, D.V.M., Veterinary Laboratory, P.O. Kabete.
Mr Hilton Merritt, Box 483, Kakamega, Kenya.
Mrs M.G. Nelms, Dept. of Land Development, University of Nairobi, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr R.G. Wilkins, Maseno Secondary School, Box 120, Maseno, Kenya.

Junior members:

Melanie Leslie, Box 30158, Nairobi.
Grace Murakaru, c/o Womens Hall 2, University of Nairobi, Box 30350, Nbi.

Life member:

Mr E.C. Hancock of Box 49190, Nairobi, was inadvertantly listed as a Full member in the last issue, I apologise for this arror.

D. Angwin, Secretary.

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African Tours anf Hotels are offering members of the Society 20% discount at their lodges and hotels this year. Contact the firm direct.

WANTED

Reasonable quality microscope at moderate price, J.E. Cooper, Vet Lab, P.O. Kabete, Kenya. (Phone Fort Smith 2231 by day).

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EANHS

BULLETIN

Editor: Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya

EANHS Secretary: Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G.C. Backhurst Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN DECEMBER 1972

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LOUIS LEAKEY - A PERSONAL APPRECIATION

Many column inches have been and will be written to describe Louis Leakey's outstanding scientific achievements in the fields of archeology and anthropology, but his qualities as a man have tended to be overlooked in the many tributes that have recently been paid to him.

My personal association with him goes back over twenty five years to the time when I came back to Kenya after eleven years in Europe - back to a Kenya still firmly entrenched in the atmosphere of colonialism. Louis and Mary befriended my wife and myself in those early years of our marriage when we needed strength and indeed reassurance that our marriage could and would work in a somewhat hostile environment. This was only one example of Louis' understanding of human problems, breadth of vision and his readiness "to do something about it".

My connection with the Society goes back many years and, here again, Louis was responsible for my appointment to its Executive Committee soon after my return, when E. Barton Worthington was President. Looking back now I realise how much I relied on Louis for guidance when, as a very new boy on that Committee, I was surrounded by the scientific giants of the era. Experience gained in those early days has stood me in good stead in recent years.
For many years, my experience as a photographer was another tie that bound me to Louis and brought us in close contact. We experimented in photographing fossils, particularly small specimens such as teeth, which are particularly difficult. When UNESCO agreed to donate a fully equipped darkroom (how persuasive he could be!) to the Department of Palaeontology it was my job to design it and draw up a list of equipment necessary.

Another memory is of the time he brought a young girl, newly arrived in this country, to see me so that I could teach her to use her first camera. His foresight and encouragement presented to the world, Jane Goodall - and the rest is history.

He was an outstanding lecturer and never refused a request to speak, particularly to the young; although sometimes I wished he would give a little more than 24 hours to produce the slides he needed for a 'sudden' lecture! But his enthusiasm was infectious. I recall the time, earlier this year, when he talked to the children of Hospital Hill School. A visitor from overseas, who happened to be present, remarked to me later not only how much he had enjoyed the talk but how impressed he was with the fact Louis never spoke down to the children; but this was part of his greatness. And talking of the School, reminds me of the girl he found to teach art appreciation and awareness there. Elizabeth was a great success but only Louis and I knew where the money came from to pay her. He was a generous man.

These are only a few incidents I recall as I sit here and think on how sadly we shall miss him. He WAS a great man in every sense of the word. But my wife and I were only aware of some of the qualities that made up Louis, the man, and our sympathies go to Mary and the rest of the family in their sad loss.

It is fitting that he should die as he lived, active to the last in spite of some physical infirmities.

J.S.K.

A SHORT NOTE ON OUR LOCAL "SAFARI ANT" *DORYLUS* SP.

Further to Mr Clifton's note (*antea* 1972:142) on Doryline ants; many folk believe that our local Nairobi Safari Ants only move or raid before, during or after rains and in fact some people reckon to be able to outdo the Meteorological Department with rain forecasts, based on the movements of these ants. I was once a believer in this folklore. This idea is erroneous and a fallacy at least as far as the common black species *Dorylus* (*Anomma*) *nigricans** goes.

We have completed over 400 consecutive days or over 100h of observations on the colonies of these ants in my 6ha plot at Karen. The activities of each colony are recorded three times a day. All routes, raids, brood movements and so on are plotted daily on a master plan, to a scale of 20 feet to 1cm. Sometimes day long watches are maintained over an interesting activity, such as brood movement.

We have found, contrary to popular belief, that each colony sends out raiding parties at sometime within each 24h period, and there may be several such parties out at different times or even at one time. These raids generally take place at night but very frequently by day, irrespictive of weather conditions, wet or dry season, hot or cold, but they do (in day light) tend to avoid open bare areas of soil or other exposed surfaces. They raid even when a colony is being moved from one nest to another. A typical day's activity is illustrated, for our colony "Black", on 26th-27th September 1972 when the colony was moving brood (larvae and pupae) to a new nest site. The routes are somewhat formalised without the hundreds of little twists and turns so typical of a column route.

On 26th September at 0700h the colony "Black" had commenced to move brood, from nest No.5 to nest No.6 in the forest. "Black" had previously occupied this nest from 18thAugust to 8th September when it moved to another nest (not shown and off this plan) where it remained from 8th September to 17th September, then it moved to nest No.5; this nest had also been used by Colony "Yellow" and "Blue" while nest No.6 had been occupied for a period by "Blue".

While moving to nest No.5, route shown by dotted line, six raids were also in progress with booty laden workers returning to Nest No.5 and others going on up the hill to nest No.6. A very big raid had taken place overnight at Areas I and II. A raid was in progress at 0730h over Area III while Area IV was also being raided and booty columns from Area V were returning to the nest. All these columns were returning firstly to nest No.5 and then going on to nest No.6 during the course of the morning. At 1500h a column and a raid in Area VI was going out and a very extensive raid was in progress at 1830h over Area VII. The brood column was still active at 1830h and still moving larvae, an indication of the size of the colony. A full day to move larvae suggests that at least two days would be required to move pupae which are generally far more numerous.

The route of the brood column was almost entirely subterranean, working firstly under deep leaf litter from the nest to a series of terraces with root supports amongst which the route ran until it reached a pathway and here was 'mined' and 'walled' for security. The route then entered the forest and travelled under deep leaf litter on the forest floor, with some parts 'tunnelled', until it reached nest No.6.

Of interest raid route V, from the nest to a patch of sugarcane, was also mostly subterranean and on 17th September was the original brood route from the previous nest to nest No.5; thus this route and that followed to nest No.6 is a 'highway' and had in the past been used by various other colonies besides "Black".

Raids I and II were via cultivation then over bare soil until they reached the forest track so these columns returned before the exposed soil became too hot. Raid III was in grassland (off the plan) and was raiding till after mid-day as the area was in shadow. Raid IV was in tall standing maize, while Raid V had been out via crops and forest. Raid VI was in the forest and so sheltered, while Raid VII was into crops and VIII under trees and bush.

On 27th September at 0730h, brood was still being moved and there was no sign of columns I to VIII, all having returned either to the new or the old nest. Raids VII and VIII had withdrawn during the night but new raiding columns were leaving from nest No.6 in the forest.

Safari ants or "Siafu" are generally unwilling to travel or raid over exposed surfaces or work under a hot sun so this is probably the reason one fails to see them until the onset of the rains, when soil temperatures are reduced and weather conditions cooler with cloud cover; under such conditions the ants raid more by day and thus become obvious, hence the suggestion that they only emerge and raid during periods of rain.

In collaboration with Professors Kistner and Gotwald, a paper on the biology of our Doryline ants is in preparation but we still want data. If any members in the Karen - Langata area have got accessible nests that they do not particularly appreciate, then i would welcome the chance to excavate these, over a weekend, and so collect the entire colony for detailed examination if possible. Naturally I am unwilling to disturb any of my own study colonies. For some idea of the size of a colony one example is sufficient, it contained 8kg of ants, hundreds of thousands of individuals!

* The genus *Dorylus* has always been very confusing and I understand from Professor Gotwald that he is now undertaking a revision and has so far studied over 70 types of species in various European museums. Our local black species is sometimes referred to as *Dorylus (Anomma) nigricans* Illiger ssp. *burmeisteri* var *molestus*.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren,
Box 24947 Karen,
(Telephone 2587).

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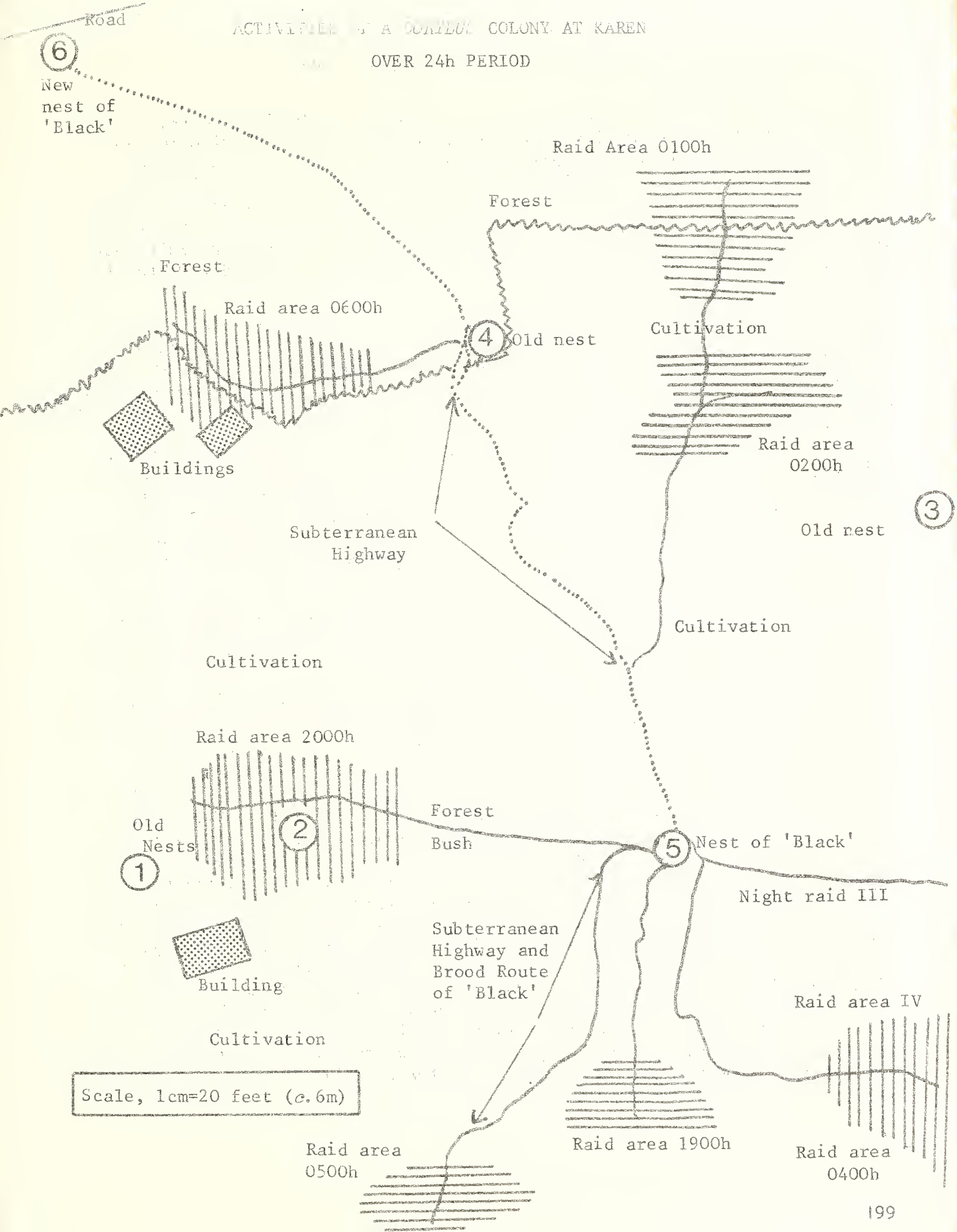
ACTIVITIES OF A *DORYLUS* COLONY AT KAREN
OVER 24h PERIOD


Road
⑥
New nest of 'Black'
Raid Area 0100h
Forest
Forest
Raid area 0600h
④ Old nest
Cultivation
Buildings
Raid area 0200h
③
Old nest
Subterranean Highway
Cultivation
Cultivation
Raid area 2000h
Old Nests
②
①
Forest
Bush
⑤ Nest of 'Black'
Night raid III
Subterranean Highway and Brood Route of 'Black'
Building
Raid area IV
Cultivation
Scale, 1cm=20 feet (*c.* 6m)
Raid area 0500h
Raid area 1900h
Raid area 0400h

ARUSHA AND TARANGIRE NATIONAL PARKS

Having planned to visit Momella Lakes in the Arusha National Park, and then go on to Tarangire National Park, I very much enjoyed reading the note by Mr Vesey-Fitzgerald in the *Bulletin* (1972:171). I have now come back from completing this visit; this is the second time that I have visited these two Parks and I am now looking forward to my next visit which I intend to plan for next April/May. I do strongly advise Society members to visit these Parks, (if they have not already done so) as both Parks are quite outstanding and offer wonderful opportunities to anyone interested in natural history.

Just a word about the journey which is quite straightforward with a good tarmac road from Nairobi to Namanga, at the Kenya/Tanzania border and on to Tarangire. The best way to be quite clear about border formalities is to ask the A.A. to let you have their printed notes on procedures to be carried out when travelling from Kenya to Tanzania. Amongst other documents, intending visitors will require a special licence for the car which is available from the Tanzania Tourist Office in the I.P.S. building in Kimathi Street, Nairobi, there is a small fee and it takes only a few minutes to obtain one. Currency regulations are strict and you should not leave Kenya with more than 100 Kenya shillings on you; I take shilling travellers cheques from Kenya which can be changed in Tanzania with ease. You will require for yourself: passport, valid re-entry permit, health documents, car registration book, insurance policy and driving licence.

If you are travelling direct from Namanga to the Arusha National Park, then you can turn left at 72km from Namanga and take the Ngare-Nanyuki road, 22km to the village and then turn right after the village, cross a bridge and the Park entrance is a further 13km approximately, then drive to the Sala Gate where you can enter the Park. There are several camping sites or you can stay at the Momella Lodge. This route saves a considerable distance compared to driving via Arusha, but you may have to go that way to obtain Tanzanian currency.

The Arusha National Park includes Mt. Meru and covers a range of habitats from an altitude of 1525m at Momella to 4575m at the summit of Mt. Meru. The altitude where the road ends inside Meru crater is 2240m. The variety of birds, animals, flowers, trees, plants and insects is enormous and to this is added the chance of seeing either or both Mts. Meru and Kilimanjaro clear of cloud in the evening. Mr Vesey-Fitzgerald has given an excellent account of what can be seen and what is taking place under the Parks Management at Arusha National Park and there is little to add to what he says. I think that driving round the lakes is most enjoyable and the variety of bird and animal life is quite exceptional. To drive up through the forest and into the crater requires a four wheel drive vehicle to reach the end of the track, although I am told that normal touring cars manage to get a long way up the mountain. One must hope for clear weather when you reach the top as the views looking out over Amboseli and towards Kilimanjaro are quite stupendous.

Whereas the Arusha National Park is small, the Tarangire National Park is very large and has an area of just over 2500km². Tarangire has only recently been gazetted as a National Park and the present warden, Mr S.Ellis is still busy carrying out improvements to the Park as I write.

All National Parks offer contrasts, and the contrast between visiting Tarangire in the rainy season of April/May and again visiting the Park in the dry season September/October is very marked. In the rainy season the accent is on the bird life and in my opinion there are more birds to be seen as one travels round the park in Tarangire than any other place that I have seen in East Africa. There are a great many mammals, but these tend to move out of the park during the rainy season but return in the dry season in very large numbers, this is largely due to the Tarangire River which gives the animals their much needed water supply.

Most Parks have something unique and at Tarangire it is to see the large Pythons curled up on the branches of the acacia trees. We looked hard on this occasion but were unfortunate, I believe the wet season is the better time to see the Pythons.

There are two other very interesting features at Tarangire and it is better to make a visit in the rainy seasons to enjoy these two sights. One is Lake Burugi where you can see large numbers of water-birds; Mr Ellis tells me that there were enormous numbers of Flamingoes on this lake this year, but in the dry season it dries out completely and there are no birds. The other very interesting feature is to drive to the eastern boundary of the park where there is a very large swamp or 'mbuga' which attracts large numbers of birds and animals which feed both in and near the swamp. This time we saw many elephant crossing the 'mbuga' but wish to return during the rains to enjoy the full benefit of this area.

There are two excellent camp sites a few miles from the tented camp lodge, they are situated on top of a cliff above a small river so one has an excellent view of the animals and birds feeding and drinking down below. The tented lodge is excellent and in the care of Mr and Mrs Von Knappitsch, we had a very comfortable stay.

I would suggest allowing 5 days to visit these two parks with two nights in each one. The road is tarmac from Nairobi to the Tarangire Park entrance and there is only a short length of murram road to take you into Momella. Nairobi to Tarangire is approximately 400km.

Oliver Brooke,
Box 42011,
Nairobi.

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Christina Richards would like to know of localities where frogs can be collected (for research on genetics and development). All species are wanted except toads *Bufo* spp., African clawed frogs *Xenopus* spp. and *Rana angolensis*. Telephone Nairobi 48454 (home) or c/o The National Museum, Box 40658, Nairobi.

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RECORDS FROM THE NYAMBENI HILLS

It appears at present that it will be some time before the notes on my collection of reptiles from the Nyambeni Hills, Kenya are complete; I thought it would be worth recording here two new distribution records from the collection.

In the period from August to December 1969 I obtained six specimens of the tree viper *Atheris desaixi* from the north-east slope of the Nyambenis about 0.11'N., 37.57'E. All the specimens came from in or near yam plantations at about 1700m altitude. One gravid female was found on the ground and the others from 30cm to just over 2m off the ground. This is the only place from which *A. desaixi* has been recorded other than from the type locality. It is about 80km from the type locality and is seperated from it by an intervening drier, lower altitude, cultivated area.

In June 1969 I obtained one Green Mamba *Dendroaspis angusticeps* from about 1000m on the north-east slopes of the Nyambenis at about 0.15'N., 38.00'E. It was caught crossing a short grass field in an area of cultivation and bush, not forest. Mrs Juleit Ament recently obtained another *D. angusticeps* killed at her camp in Meru National Park. These *D. angusticeps* are about 160km further inland than any previous specimens. They had probably travelled up the Tana River and its tributaries, as they are commonly found in the thick bush behind the beach all along the coast.

A look through Mackworth-Praed & Grant shows that though several Rollers are reported to eat lizards, only the Rufous-crowned Roller *Coracias naevia* is listed as eating small reptiles i.e. snakes as well. During May 1972, when staying at Lake Naivasha, I saw a Lilac-breasted Roller *C. caudata* with something sticking out of its beak. It proved to be the last 10-15cm of a Green Snake *Philothamnus* sp. which was slowly swallowed in the next two minutes. The snake would probably have been about 40cm long.

Gerald Rilling,
Box 40469,
Nairobi.

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A BIRD TABLE IN NAIROBI

My bird table at Westlands, is placed where I have a good view of the 'Guests' from my bedroom window and also from the verandah where we often have afternoon tea. It is quite close to an archway of Bougainvillea and a large clump of bamboo is a few metres away. The table is made of a 2m pole (of which 30cm are buried in the ground) with a 30cm square tray fastened firmly to the top; this tray has a 3cm high edging, which prevents the food blowing off it. The height from the ground is important for the table must be safe from cats and even at just under 2m from the ground I had to tie branches of Kei apple thorns round the pole to prevent my neighbour's cats from taking flying leaps on to it.

On the table there is a brown pottery flat bowl for drinking or bathing, wedged into a corner with a large, flat stone. This is much appreciated and in the hot weather needs to be refilled two or three times a day.

Now, about the 'visitors'. The first was a Pied Crow *Corvus albus* under the impression that the stone was a piece of meat I think, and he was so disgusted that he has not troubled the table again. The regular daily comers are.-

Reichenow's Weavers - - - - *Ploceus baglafecht*
Holub's Golden Weavers - - - *P. xanthops*
Grey-headed Sparrows - - - - *Passer grisues*
Red-eyed Doves - - - - - - *Streptopelia semitorquata*
Bronze Mannikins - - - - - *Lonchura cucullata*
Rufous-backed Mannikins - - - *L. bicolor*
Purple Indigobirds - - - - *Vidua chalybeata*
Pin-tailed Whydahs - - - - *V. macroura*
Red-billed Fire Finches - - - *Lagonosticta senegala*
Waxbills - - - - - - - - *Estrilda astrild*

The last six mentioned come in a mixed flock of over forty each morning as soon as the food is put out on the table (about 7 a.m.). The Pin-tailed Whydahs come in their immature or non-breeding plumage but not when they have developed their long tails - then they go off on their mating displays into the Reserve - and the Purple Indigobird females come more steadily than the quarrelsome males, (the former have red bills and the latter pink toes).

Not quite such regular visitors are:-

Dark-capped Bulbuls - - - - *Pycnonotus barbatus*
Olive Thrushes - - - - - - *Turdus abyssinicus*
Boubou Shrikes - - - - - - *Laniarius ferrugineus*
Speke's Weavers - - - - - - *Ploceus spekei*
Black-headed Weavers - - - - *P. cucullatus*
Rufous Sparrows - - - - - - *Passer iagonensis*
Robin Chats - - - - - - - *Cossypha caffra*
White-eyed Slatey Flycatchers - *Melaenornis chocolatina*
Laughing Doves - - - - - - *Streptopelia senegalensis*
African Citrils - - - - - - *Serinus citrinelloides*
Streaky Seed-eaters - - - - *S. striolatus*

and once the Purple Grenadier *Estrilda ianthinogaster* honoured the table by a visit (but alas, he has not come again) which makes the total number of species seen on the bird table 23 counting the Pied Crow. In one very dry season two kinds of Sunbirds, the Malachite *Nectarinia famosa* and Olive *N. olivacea* came for water, but I do not count them among my regular guests.

The food I provide is millet and posho with occasionally half an Avocado Pear or a Custard Apple. WARNING don't leave the stock of millet about where the Waxbills can get at it. I have known them get INTO a paper bag left on the window ledge. For a time I tried putting 'Jagari' sugar on the bird table, which the Bulbuls loved, but the bees found it too and became so troublesome that I had to give it up. Why not try a bird table in your garden?

Miss Mary Rickman,
Pioneer Ward, Nairobi Hospital,
Box 30026, Nairobi

BIRD BATH AT NJORO

My bird bath at Njoro, on the foothills of the Mau, about 2500m above sea level, stands at the end of an arbour covered in Golden Shower *Pyrostegia venusta*. Behind tha bath are clumps of scarlet salvia and tall succulents, and from above hang fronds of the Golden Shower. In mid-August we had a few days of heavy rain and at about that time there was spectacular activity around the bath, mostly between one and two in the afternoon.

One day, two Red-naped Widow Birds *Euplectes ardens* splashed side by side in the water, facing me as I sat on the verandah about 10m away. Soon they were disturbed by an agressive White-winged Widow Bird *E. albonotatus* with a chestnut feather above the white, he chased the other birds away. The Reichenow's and Masked Weavers *Ploceus baglafecht* and *P. intermedius* (the latter in brilliant orange-yellow plumage) who are both regular visitors, could hardly get a look in. There were various female Sunbirds *Nectarinia* spp., who were difficult to identify in the scrum, but for one with a long bill and paler chest whose husband, a Malachite Sunbird *N. famosa* was in brilliant emerald green breeding plumage. The fluttering, splashing and jumping up and down of these brilliantly coloured birds was quite breathtaking. A Yellow Bishop *E. capensis*, still looking rather speckled brown, came a little later, he is generally most regular at about 2 p.m.

A couple of weeks later, when the rain had finished, the Yellow Bishop was back again this time in deep velvet black and yellow breeding dress. His little wife was having a bath by herself and he was perched nearby on a succulent flapping his wings up and down. Then, still flapping them, he joined her in the bath and after a splash they flew off together. The Malachite Sunbird was not there, but a gorgeous purple and crimson male Tacazze Sunbird *N. tacazze* and his wife were taking a bath. One Red-naped Widow Bird came and also the usual weavers, Brimstone Canaries *S. sulphuratus*, many waxbills *Estrilda astrild*, Cordon Bleus *E. bengala* and one Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura* in black and white with red bill, but no long tail.

Other birds keep different hours; Ring-necked and Laughing Doves *Streptopelia capicola* and *S. senegalensis*, Glossy Starlings *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*, Olive Thrushes *Turdus abyssinicus*, White-eyed Slatey Flycatchers *Melaenornis chocolatina* and the Robin Chat *Cossypha caffra* (who attends all meals on the verandah for snips of butter or cheese and cleans up the flies on the window panes most regularly).

Now that the tarmac road runs through Njoro to Molo and my garden is only about 3km from Njoro any members who would care to call would be most welcome.

Mrs Mary Bruce,
P.O. Njoro,
Kenya.

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INSECT COLLECTING

The Joint Committee for the Conservation of British Insects has produced "A Code for Insect Collecting" aimed at reducing the amount of collecting of insects in the British Isles. The "Code" is not, of course, enforcable by law but provides a set of rules which all British entomologists are being encouraged to read and follow. In its introduction the Committee draws attention to the ever-increasing destruction of habitat due to 'development' and goes on to stress that unrestricted collecting of insects in certain areas could now well result in the extermination of some species from these localities.

The Code is divided into six main sections, as follows:-

Collecting - general
Collecting - rare and endangered species
Collecting - lights and light traps
Collecting - permission and conditions
Breeding

Each of these sections is further sub-divided into a number of rules. Space does not permit reproduction of all these but an example from each section is given below:-

1. No more specimens than are strictly required for any purpose should be killed.
2. Collectors should attempt to break new ground rather than collect a local or rare species from a well known and perhaps overworked locality.
3. If a trap used for scientific purposes is found to be catching rare or local species unnecessarily it should be re-sited.
4. Always seek permission from landowners or occupiers when collecting on private land.
5. Do as little damage to the enviroment as possible. Remember the interests of other naturalists; be careful of nesting birds and vegetation, particularly rare plants.
6. Breeding from a fertilised female or pairing in captivity is preferable to taking a series of specimens in the field.

The East African naturalist may wonder of what significance the above Code is to him. It must be remembered, however, that the ecological pressures that have necessitated the production of such a Code in Britain are also at work here. Areas such as the Kakamega Forest in Kenya are unique for their fauna and flora and yet such habitats are being rapidly destroyed by such factors as tree-felling, agriculture and urban development. Concern has been expressed over the threat to the mammals and birds of such areas but little, if anything, has been said about their insect fauna. Nearer Nairobi, the Ngong Forest is being destroyed or its character radically altered by similar factors. At the present time this forest abounds in attractive butterflies (such as *Papilio* spp. and *Graphium* spp.) and the locality is a popular hunting ground for lepidopterists but the time will come when such butterflies are drastically reduced in numbers and unnecessary collecting may result in their complete disappearance. Insects in East Africa are already subjected to other adverse pressures such as habitat destruction and insecticides; it would be a tragedy if thoughtless collecting was to accelerate their extermination.

The "Code for Insect Collecting' outlined above is far from perfect. Many criticisms could be levelled against it; in particular it concentrates on the macrolepidoptera and neglects other Orders of insects, many of which include threatened species. Nevertheless, it is a welcome start and if adhered to, could contribute greatly towards the conservation of British insects. A similar code would not be out of place in East Africa and every individual entomologist could well consider using it as a personal guide.

J.E. Cooper,
C/o Veterinary Res. Lab.
P.O. Kabete.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Re: "Somali Ostrich in Nairobi National Park" *antea* (1972:182-3) by J.F. Reynolds: Some years ago young Somali Ostriches from a clutch of eggs found in Northern Kenya were introduced into Nairobi National Park. They have now reached full adult plumage and can commonly be seen near the Mombasa Road Gate.

Also with reference to Roger Frankum's "Lake Naivasha Observations" *Bulletin* (1972:44-5):-

1. The large rodents seen swimming on Lake Naivasha are usually Nutria or Coypu (*Myocastor coypus*) introduced from South America for 'fur-farming'.

2. The lovebirds are Fischer's Lovebirds, escaped from cages and beginning to establish themselves both on Naivasha and north of Mombasa. (By the way, are the hybrids fertile?).

Fleur Ng'weno,
Box 42271,
Nairobi.

Sir,

I was most interested to read Mr Forbes-Watson's note on "Birds naturalised in East Africa" in your August issue.

But there IS a species naturalised in Uganda, the Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*. This species is abundant in Kampala, but it is truly a bird of the city, not being found in the surrounding countryside. In Kampala it occurs in its variously coloured forms in the same way as in European cities.

I should be very interested to hear from anybody who knows when it was introduced into Kampala. I have not been able to find any past records of it at all, but then it is rather a slippery species to catch, and may well have been ignored. In fact it is not even mentioned by Williams in either field guide or by Mackworth-Praed & Grant.

Secondly I was interested to read Mr Harper's note in the September issue on fruit bats being electrocuted by power lines. It is quite a common sight in Kampala to see a fruit bat hanging from a cable in the day time, presumably electrocuted. These would probably be the Yellow-haired Fruit Bats *Eidolon helvum* of which there is at least one large roosting site nearby (Bere, R.M. (1961): The Wild Mammals of Uganda).

Roger Frankum,,
16, Berry's Road,
Upper Bucklebury,
Reading,
Berkshire, U.K.

MARKED PELICANS

As part of my research work on Pelican behaviour, I have recently succeeded in catching and marking 20 adult Great White Pelicans *Pelecanus onocrotalus* (and hopefully more will be done soon, including some Pink-backed Pelicans *P. rufescens*). In addition to ringing them with a black PVC leg ring, I have attached to each wing a coloured plastic disc - 75mm in diameter - with a number or symbol on it.

I would be extremely grateful to have a report from anyone re-sighting any of these birds, noting the date;place;colour of discs; number or symbol on disc and its colour.

Pelican movements are certainly frequent and probably extensive up and down the Rift Valley but as yet very little is known or documented on this subject, and I hope to be able to collect some interesting data.

Daphne Nightingale,
Zoology Dept.,
Chiromo, Box 30197,
Nairobi.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 4th December 1972 at 5.15 p.m: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi.
Dr J.B. Sale will give an illustrated lecture on "Hyrax and Elephants".

Sunday 17th December, 1972 or weekend Saturday/Sunday 16th/17th Dec. 1972.
Field excursion to Ulu to the farm of F.O'B. Wilson. Members wishing to camp are welcome to do so, but should be fully equipped with food and water. Otherwise please meet at the farm on Sunday at 9 a.m. To reach the farm, proceed on the Nairobi-Mombasa road for about 80km (50 miles) and turn left at the signboard of F.O'B. Wilson, then follow the signposts to the camp or meeting place.

Many migrant birds pass through this area and local birds should be nesting or feeding young. With the present wet weather flowering wild plants should be in evidence.

EXTRA Monay 18th December 1972, at 5.15 p.m. at the museum Hall, Nairobi. National Audubon Society Film taken early 1972 in the Serengeti National Park will be shown, introduction by Mr Don Turner,

Monday, 8th January 1973 at 5.15 p.m.: Mr C.A. Classen will give an illustrated lecture on "Hunting Succulents in East Africa".

Weekend (12th) 13th/14th January 1973: Visit to Kericho by kind co-operation of Brook Bond Liebig Kenya, Ltd. Leaders Mr & Mrs L.A.S. Grumbley. Details later.

Weekend 16th-18th February 1973: Bushwhackers Safari Camp. By request of members who missed the visit there last July; we are arranging another weekend, those who wish to attend please write direct to Mrs Stanton P.O. Kibwezi for bookings and details as early as possible. Camping facilities or bandas are available.

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NEW MEMBERS - DECEMBER 1972

Full members:

Mrs D.N. Copp, Box 30048, Nairobi.
Prof. Dr C.I.M. van Eijnatten, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr Anthony F. Pascoe, Box 30471, Nairobi.
Mr Marvin A. Pistrang, Peace Corps, Box 30518, Nairobi.
Mr A.R.K. Saba, Dept. of Zoology, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr John Viste, Box 14403, Nairobi.
Mr A.J. Deane, Box 591, Nakuru, Kenya.

Junior member:

Stephen Langdon, Box 43183, Nairobi.

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FOR SALE

Mackworth-Praed & Grant, Birds of Eastern & North Eastern Africa. 2 vols. 2nd. Edition. Offers to Mike Sugg, Agoro Sare High School, Box 10008, Oyugis, S. Nyanza.

Klauber's 2 vol. (1476 pp.) work RATTLESNAKES, published in 1956. Perfect condition. Shs.300/-. Ring Alistair Graham, Karen 2438.

The Journal *ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR* Volumes 6 (1958) to 16 (1968). Shs.100/- Ring Alistair Graham, Karen 2438.

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JOURNAL

The Society publishes a leading and highly respected scientific journal—*The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

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EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY *BULLETIN*, 1972

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